COMPUTER Gaming World

October 1987
Number 40
$3.50



Special Wargaming Issue

S.S.I.'s Rebel Charge At Chickamauga



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- Russia
- Rommel At Gazala
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COMPUTER Gaming World

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Number 40

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Psalm 9:1-2

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TAKING A PEEK

Applied Computer Consultants
Pentagon Tower Box 36186
Edina, MN 55435

BATTLE COMMAND: Fought over a 40 x 20 map grid, this game is a challenging two player game with a multitude of options. Most importantly, it offers a play-by-modem option (supports 300/1200 baud). C-64/128 ($21.50). Circle Reader Service #1.

Avalon Hill Game Company
4517 Harford Rd.
Baltimore, MD

NBA: In this product licensed by the NBA, the designers of Super Sunday offer the first statistics-based basketball game to feature animated graphics. The game comes with twenty great professional teams of the past (including five different Boston Celtics teams). Apple II, C-64, IBM ($39.95). Circle #2.

Britannica Software
185 Berry Street
San Francisco, CA 94107

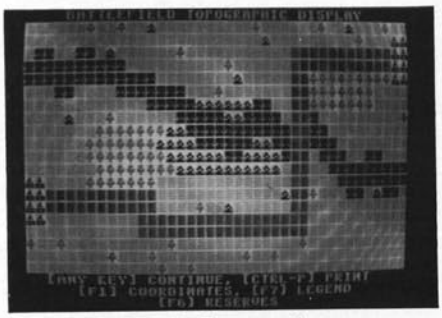
MILLIONAIRE II: Remember Jim Zuber's classic Millionaire stock market simulation? This new release is even better. Now, more than one player can compete in the same market environment, purchases on margin are allowed and "selling short" has been added. Apple II (128K), IBM ($59.95). Circle Reader Service Card #3.

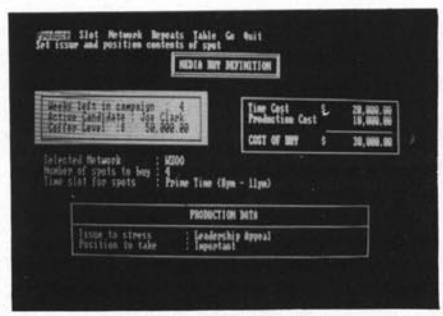
Campaigns & Elections
1331 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, #12E
Washington, D.C. 20004

ON THE CAMPAIGN TRAIL: The most detailed election simulation marketed to date, the only thing missing is a newspaper reporter in the shrubbery. This senatorial election game allows up to two players to compete with five total candidates in an attempt to get your candidate elected in the fictional state of Targon. The documentation is excellent. Major review coming. IBM ($29.95). Circle Reader Service Card #4.

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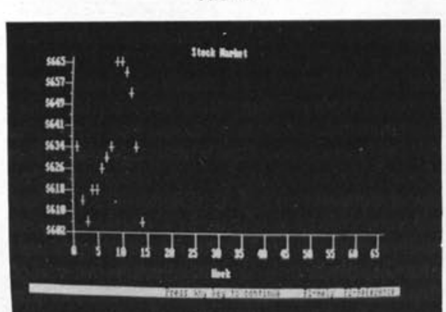

Battle Command


On The Campaign Trail

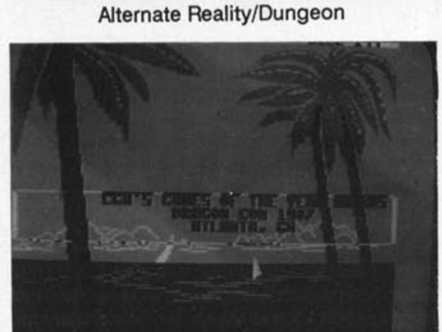

N.B.A.



Alternate Reality/Dungeon



Millionaire II


Video Title Shop

Datasoft
19808 Nordhoff Pl.
Chatsworth, CA 91311

ALTERNATE REALITY-THE DUNGEON: In this sequel to The City, your character can continue his/her adventures begun in the City of Xebec's Demise. This game is bigger than the original and offers more role playing challenges than the earlier game. C-64 ($34.95). Circle Reader Service Card #5.

VIDEO TITLE SHOP and GRAPHICS COMPANION: These two products offer tremendous versatility in creating titles and/or credits for one's video productions. Users select from four different pens and 16 different colors. Apple, Atari 800, C-64 ($29.95 for VTS, $19.95 for GCI). Circle Reader Service Card #6.

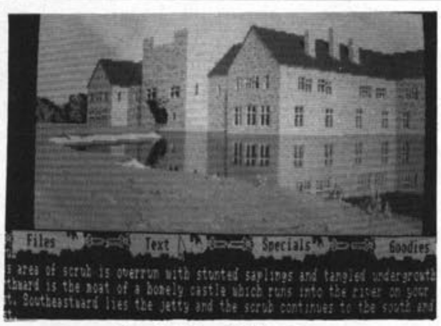
Firebird Licensees, Inc.
P.O. Box 49
Ramsey, NJ 07446

THE GUILD OF THIEVES: For a game that's a real "steal," you can join the Worshipful and Partially Honourable Guild of Professional Nocturnal and Surreptitious Entry and Removal Operatives in this new hybrid text/graphic game. Technically a semi-sequel to The Pawn, it is set in the kingdom of Kerovnia. Nevertheless, you don't have to have played The Pawn to play this highly-humorous adventure. Amiga, ST, Apple II (text only), Atari, C-64, IBM, and Mac ($39.95 for 8 bit machines, $44.95 for IBM and 16 bit machines). Circle Reader Service Card #9.

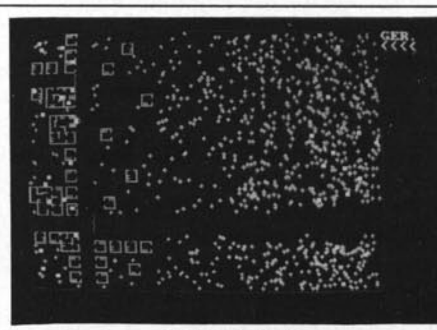
Infocom
125 Cambridge Park Dr.
Cambridge, MA 02140

NORD AND BERT COULDN'T MAKE HEAD OR TAIL OF IT: In a "Manor of Speaking," all the rooms can literally talk (I suppose that would floor you!) and one adventure can make you "Eat Your Words" (sounds like "foot-in-mouth disease" to me!). Those are two of eight adventures based on cliches, spoonerisms, homonyms, and playful alliteration. This product will be punfull to solve. Apple II (128K), C-64, ($34.95), Amiga, IBM, Mac, and ST ($39.95). Circle Reader Service Card #10.

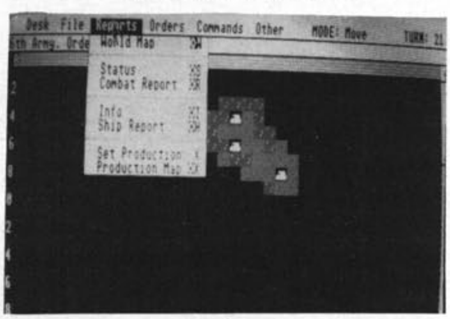
PLUNDERED HEARTS: Harlequin's romance style has arrived at Infocom in this new game. A 17th Century gentlewoman sails to visit



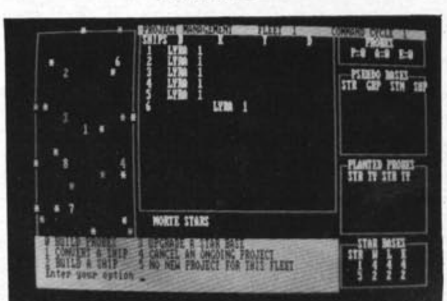
The Guild of Thieves


Battle Ground

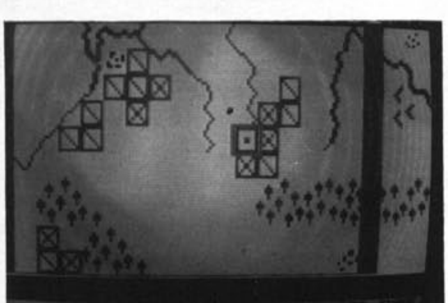

Alien Fires 2199 AD



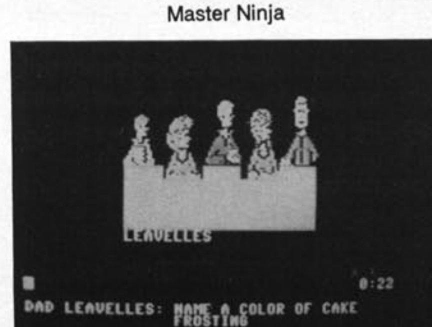
Empire


Facing The Empire


Master Ninja


Borodino 1812


Bop'n Rumble



Family Feud

her ailing father in the West Indies. Before she can even reach the Bermuda Triangle, she is whisked off by a dashing pirate captain. What happens to her chest? Apple II, C-64 ($34.95), Amiga, IBM, Mac, and ST ($39.95). Circle Reader Service Card #11.

Interstel
P.O. Box 57825
Webster, TX 77598

EMPIRE: The publishers of Star Fleet I and II have introduced this game as a companion game dealing with planetary surface combat in the Star Fleet universe. Imagine a strategic level wargame with a similar interface/command structure to the tactical space games and you have a good idea of the game. IBM ($49.95), Amiga and ST ($55.00). Circle Reader Service Card #12.

Krentek Software
P.O. Box 720081
McAllen, TX 78502-9990

BORODINO: 1812: This game is noteworthy for format, subject matter, and playability. Napoleonics buffs will love the historical detailing reflected in this game based on Napoleon's "Russian Campaign." Atari, C-64 ($59.95). Circle Reader Service Card #13.

MVP Software
1035 Dallas SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49507

BATTLE GROUND: This tactical squad level game simulates combat on the western front of World War II. The maps are attractive and functional, but the individual soldiers are merely represented by white squares. Note that it takes two to tango (there is no AI) in this game. IBM ($29.95). Circle Reader Service Card #14.

FACING THE EMPIRE: This game plays like a cousin to the early Andromeda Conquest by Avalon Hill. It is played solitaire, however, and offers more sophisticated decision points and combat resolution. Can you guess whether the Lyrans or the Morte Star Empire is the peace-loving culture in this strategic space campaign game? IBM ($29.95). Circle Reader Service #15.

Mindscape, Inc.
3444 Dundee Rd.
Northbrook, IL 60062

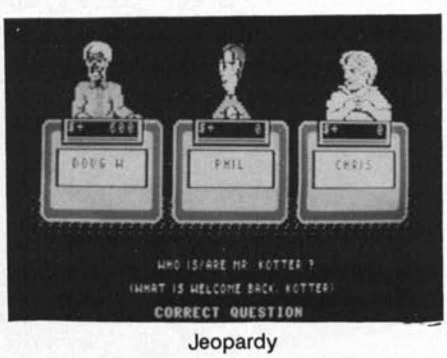
BOP'N RUMBLE: With the basic system familiar from Bop'n Wrestle, this new arcade game takes your wrestler out on the streets in order to save "Granny" from the vicious punks and mongrel menaces who have gone wild. Watch out, though. "Granny" is about as helpless as the one on "The Beverly Hillbillies." C-64 ($29.95). Circle Reader Service #16.

Paragon Software Corp.
600 Rugh Street
Greensburg, PA 15601

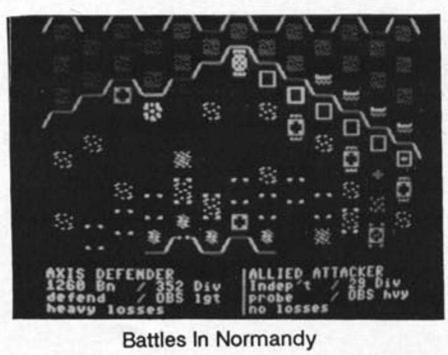
ALIEN FIRES 2199 AD: This space adventure game uses two disks on the Amiga to give the player an opportunity to become a TimeLord (a la Dr. Who?). The game makes outstanding use of Amiga graphics and sound throughout. The characters one encounters are true works of art. Amiga ($39.95). Circle Reader Service #17.

MASTER NINJA: SHADOW WARRIOR OF DEATH: Chuck Norris lives, as it were, in a martial arts/action adventure game with 20 combat moves, 25 screens, numerous opponents, and plenty of weapon choices, as well as that which is missing from many action games - a story line. IBM ($34.95). Circle #18.

Continued on page 56



Jeopardy

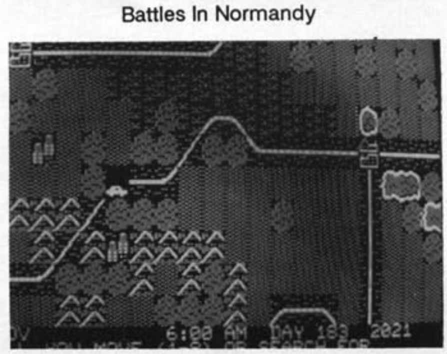


Battles In Normandy

Please fill out Reader Input Device on Page 63



Wheel of Fortune



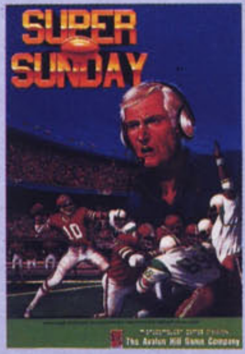
Roadwar Europa


The illustration used in CGW #39's Scorpion's Tale was originally drawn by Avril Harrison for EA's Bard's Tale.

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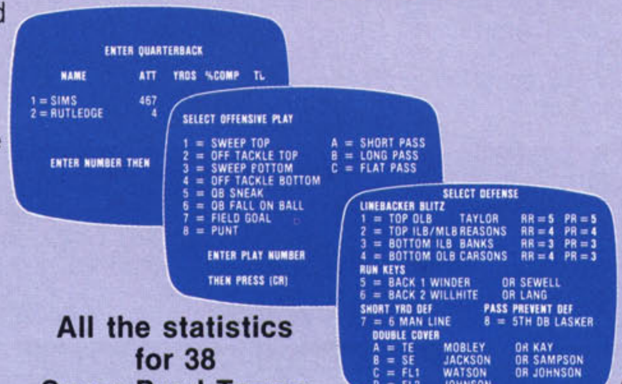
C= Apple IBM* CGB req'd

1984, '85, '86 Seasons: $20.00

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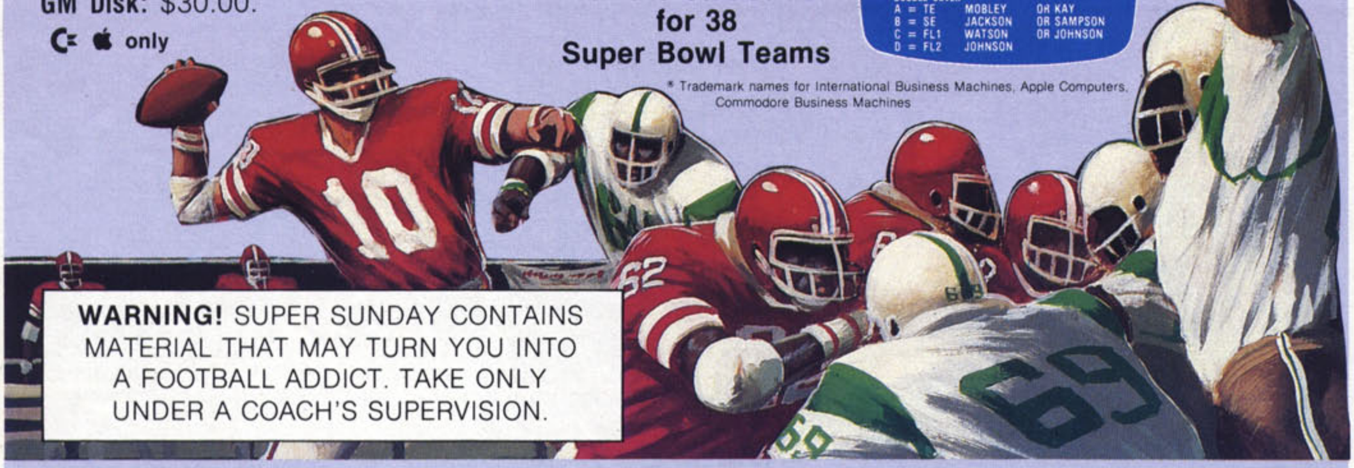
GM Disk: $30.00.

C= Apple only



All the statistics for 38 Super Bowl Teams

* Trademark names for International Business Machines, Apple Computers, Commodore Business Machines



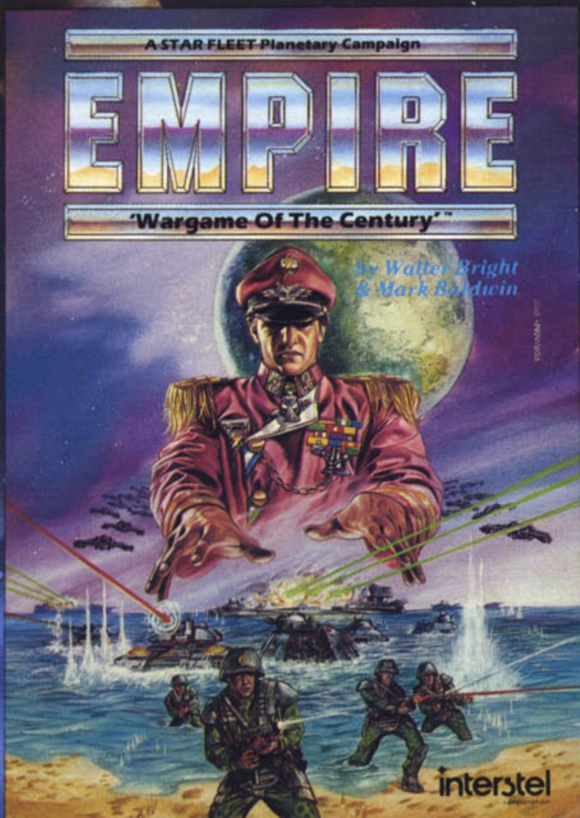
WARNING! SUPER SUNDAY CONTAINS MATERIAL THAT MAY TURN YOU INTO A FOOTBALL ADDICT. TAKE ONLY UNDER A COACH'S SUPERVISION.

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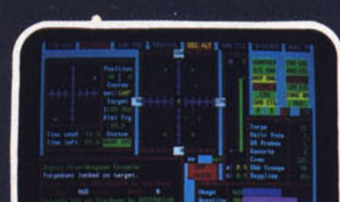
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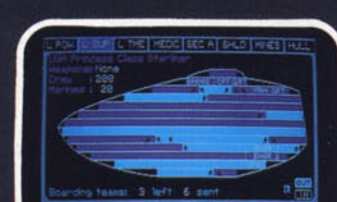
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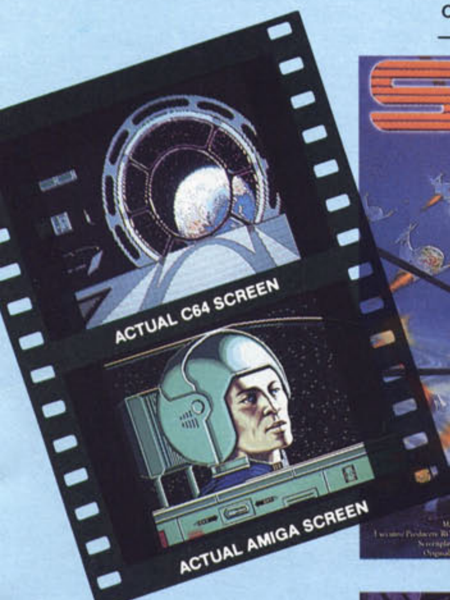
AWARD WINNING GRAPHICS

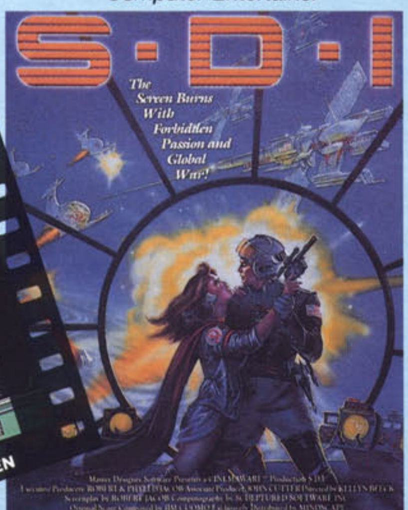
Best Graphics: 16 Bit Division.—*The Software Publishers Association, 1986*

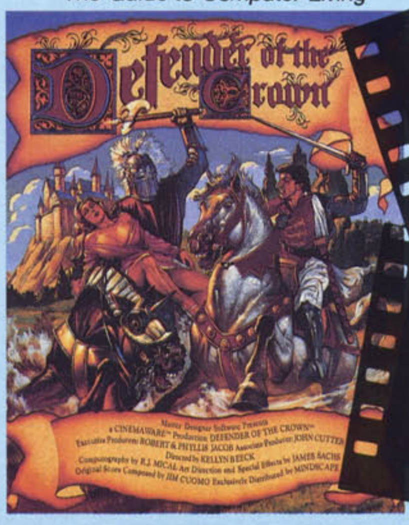
Award For Special Artistic Achievement In A Computer Game.
—*Computer Gaming World, 1987*

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—*Computer Entertainer*

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—*The Guide to Computer Living*



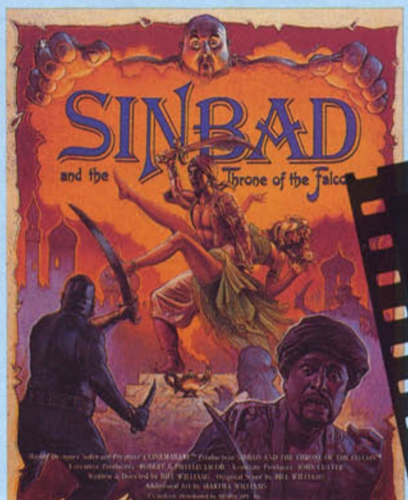














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Russia
The Great War in the East 1941-1945

Review by M. Evan Brooks

NAME;	RUSSIA (The Great War in the East 1941-1945)
SYSTEMS:	Apple, C-64
PRICE:	$40.00
PLAYERS:	0-2 (or more)
DESIGNER:	Roger Keating Ian Trout
PUBLISHER:	Strategic Studies Group Australia Walnut Creek, CA (USA)

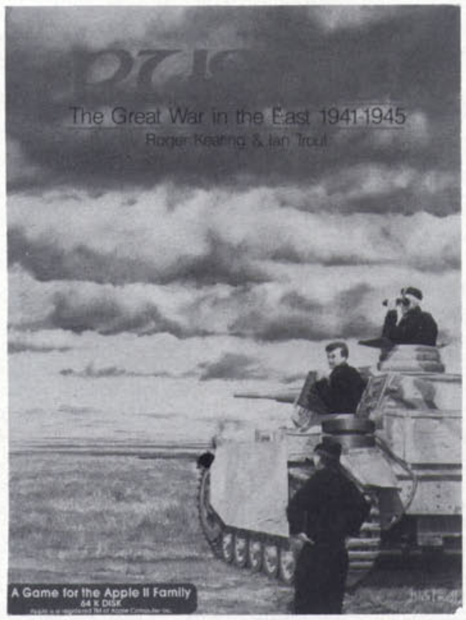
The lure of the Steppes, the roar of the Panzers . . . such is the stuff of wargamer's dreams, and *Strategic Studies Group* has attempted to fulfill the fantasy. The Eastern Front (or the Great Patriotic War) holds a deep fascination for military simulationists. Despite what is learned in U.S. high schools, one has to acknowledge that the Eastern Front was the decisive straw that razed the Thousand Year Reich, since over 60% of the German war effort was always devoted to the East, and the normal percentage was 75.

SSG's *Russia* is a fascinating product. While it has problems, the sheer scope and playability of the product render it one of the more interesting computer games released in recent memory.

The sheer scope and playability of the product render it one of the more interesting computer games released in recent memory

The mechanics are easy to learn, but mastery of the system is difficult. In addition to a normal review, this reviewer hopes that his experiences may save the consumer a rather long learning curve.

Rather than a true descendant of SSG's **Battlefront**, *Russia* may be more properly described as a cousin. This reviewer was seemingly one of the few consumers not to have been awed



by Battlefront. Its implementation of subordinate commands and handling of artillery seemed to render it less than the watershed design it might have been (as an aside, the designers have assured this reviewer that these problems have been corrected in Version 1.1). Thus, this reviewer's initial impression of "cousin" *Russia* was muted. Continued playings of *Russia*, however, revealed subtle nuances that do make this game a "player" and one to be seriously considered for inclusion in the "Wargamer's Essential Library."

The Impressionistic War Game

The most important lesson to learn from *Russia* is that it has little relation to boardgaming or most computer antecedents. If one is willing and able to think in new concepts, then *Russia* will prove to be rewarding. Implementation of normal wargaming strategy and tactics will lead one to disappointment and defeat.

While most wargames (both board and computer) are linear in nature, *Russia* can only be described as impressionistic. The simulation (from the Axis viewpoint) does indeed offer a sense of historical thrust and counterthrust, but in a more sweeping method than heretofore seen. "Normal" simulations require fronts to be protected by locking zones of control while offensives are characterized by seeking the weak point for the *schwerpunkt*.

This is not true in *Russia*. Units are employed in superior formations with a tendency for such units to mass around the headquarters. Cohesive lines will NEVER appear after the initial turn. Even stranger, assaults will be made against the strongest unit in the axis of advance, and not the weakest as usual wargaming standards prescribe. Zones of control do not exist, and railroad movement (handled completely by the computer) allows units to move by rail ADJACENT to enemy forces.

One's initial response of astonishment and unease must be tempered by a different gestalt. Historically, armies did not mass from Leningrad to Sebastopol shoulder to shoulder, and assaults generally had to strike the enemy's defensive positions. This concept requires adjustment and a willingness to learn *ab initio*.

Mechanics of Play

The map for *Russia* ranges from Rostock-Berlin-Zagreb (west) to Kazan-Saratov-Stalingrad-Grozny (east) [cf. map inset]. Various terrain types, cities and rail lines are easily recognized.

The basic unit is the German Korps/Soviet Army. However, chains of command run from German OKH (*Oberkommando des Heeres* [Supreme Command of the Armies] to Army Group (North, Center and South) to Armee (composed of Korps). Soviet equivalents run from STAVKA to Theatre (A, B, and C) to Front (composed of Armies). Please note that Soviet Armies are equivalent in size to Axis Korps and that Soviet Fronts are equivalent to Axis Armees.

Although the Korps/Army is the basic formation appearing on the map, it is composed of divisions. These are handled by replacements feeding into the Korps/Army structure and for further detail, casualties are taken in regi-

ments (equivalent to one-third of a division). While the structure may appear confusing, it is relatively easy to grasp once one begins using *Russia*.

In a scenario, one represents an Army Group/Theater, while the Campaign Scenario offers the player the opportunity to represent OKH/STAVKA and/or subordinate command(s). From OKH/STAVKA's perspective, one may issue doctrinal directives on a monthly basis -- Retire, Defend, Active and Attack. Army Group/Theatre may direct between Main Effort, Normal and Rest. Finally, Armee/Front may choose between Assault, Probe, Defend and Retreat (for units in contact) or Advance, Deploy and Hold (for other units).

Main Effort consumes massive supplies and is utilized for major offensive efforts, Normal orders are made for units in contact with the enemy, and Rest allows one to recuperate and build up a viable attacking force. Most of the lower orders are self-explanatory. Note, however, that Advance orders the units to a certain objective, while Deploy orders these same units to move within two hexes (80 miles) of the parent headquarters. Hold allows a unit to dig into prepared defensive positions up to an eventual fortification level of three.

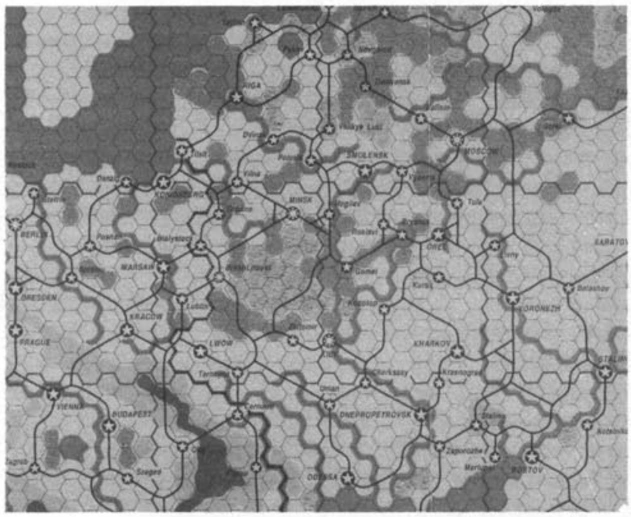
Documentation and Other Problems

The documentation is extensive and written in a "folksy" manner. However, this only serves to conceal a problem. The problem is not that the documentation misleads the user, but rather that so much is left unsaid.

Supply/Railroad lines are the key to victory. Yet, nowhere in the documentation is there any explanation of roughly how far one can extend one's supply lines.

While this is done automatically by the computer, too much data is withheld from the player. For example, if one plans an offensive, he should have some idea of how long it would take his supply lines to catch up with him.

Granted that such knowledge should be approximate at best, it would still alleviate much concern by the player.



Terrain effects are not delineated. While one can assume that a river line or a fortified city defense would have some benefit, the documentation is again silent.

Combat results are defined in terms of hits and losses. While losses appear to be the most important concern, hits are simply undefined, leading one to wonder what they in fact represent. Also, while one can check Korps status, it is difficult to see whether or not a unit is on the verge of destruction.

Neither fatigue levels (Fresh, Fit, Tired and Exhausted), troop quality (Green, Trained, Veteran and Elite), nor supply conditions (Excellent, Good, Fair and Poor) are stated. While one can obtain this data by utilizing the design routine, it should have appeared in the documentation.

"Last Resort" is a message occasionally received when attempting to find an objective. This is undefined in the documentation. It sounds worrisome, but in fact, merely represents the fact that as an objective, the Last Resort might well place one's units out of supply. Therefore, one should consider how important such an objective is before selecting it.

The Siberian army appears as purple units when one plays the German. Nowhere in the documentation is this fact mentioned. While one can assume this, it should have been mentioned.

Moscow/Leningrad are important objectives. Yet, the documentation is silent as to their effect. Seizure of Leningrad plays havoc with Lend Lease aid and seizure of Moscow plays havoc with Soviet reinforcements. While most gamers intuitively realize the importance of these goals, some documented acknowledgment would have been preferred.

Victory conditions are reported by point totals, assuming an automatic victory is not achieved. However, one is not cognizant of what such points represent. Does a German victory of 200 points mean tactical or decisive? (Based upon discussions with SSG, a differential of 120% yields a tactical victory, while a differential of 150% yields a decisive victory).

Objective hexes are limited to cities. It would have been nice to define an objective as a geographic point not limited by the city. In that manner, one could better attempt massive encirclements and limited tactical offensives.

Strategic and Tactical Guidelines

Soviet: From the Allied perspective, one needs few hints. The initial Axis onslaught is massive, and Doctrine should be Retire and retreat as much as possible. Eventually, the German steamroller will run out of steam.

Though the Soviet may have only eight units left on the map and holes everywhere, the German will be incapable of further exploitation. His supply lines will render him impotent. Thereafter, a careful and methodical

Continued on page 14

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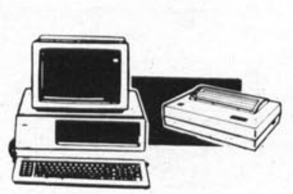
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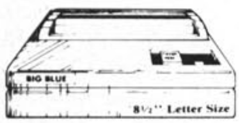
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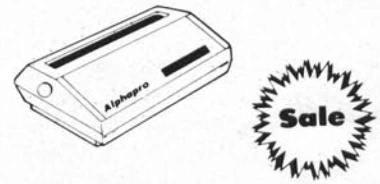
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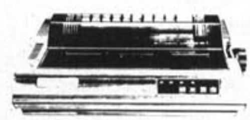
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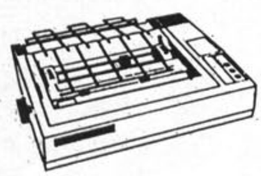
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Continued from page 11

offensive should serve to throw the Fascist Beast back to his borders.

Ahistorically, the war can be won, in effect, by February, 1942. The remainder of the war becomes a gradual grinding down of Axis units while the Soviet Forces become stronger and wait for supplies to become available for other offensives. As long as Moscow and Leningrad are retained, the Russian has little to fear.

Axis: The Axis role is the primary appeal of *Russia*. While the Soviet can make fifty mistakes and win, the Axis cannot afford ANY mistakes. Initially, the Axis Offensive is unstoppable. Therefore, for the first three months, CHARGE. Once the Russian defense begins to shore up, the German must assume a completely different mindset. *never again* can the German assume the headlong offensive. Offensives must be carefully considered and limited in nature.

Overambition is the key to ignominious defeat. In fact, once the initial offensive is over, German losses per week must be kept under 3 German Korps per week *at all costs*.

Even at this rate, such losses on a continuing basis will bleed the *Wehrmacht* dry.

Russia: A SAMPLE GAME

1941: Assuming command of OKH plus all Army Groups, this reviewer began his Drang Nach Osten (Push to the East). The initial campaign season went reasonably well, although Leningrad did not fall. By the end of 1941, a reasonable defensive perimeter was established (cf. map). The Tula-Kursk-Kharkov salient was established because there were was no visible opposition. The Dnepropetrovsk line was established because of its defensive benefits. A prior Campaign move to Rostov was met by a winter offensive which destroyed Army Group South.

1942: Soviet offensives pushed back Army Group North which retired in disarray.

Yet, Army Group Center pressed on to Moscow, and battles raged for the Soviet capital. It held, and German gains in the south were tactical at best.

1943: Soviet offensives proved devastating, and the situation looked bleak.

Army Group North was virtually destroyed, and even Riga looked in danger of falling. The Moscow salient was pushed back, and Army Group South reeled back.

The Center held, not because of any master defense, but simply because Soviet Forces were elsewhere.

1944: The Year of Decision! In a daring winter offensive, 2nd SS Panzer Korps (heretofore left on the eastern periphery) found a Moscow undefended.

Soviet Forces had assumed the offensive and were attempting the Destruction of Army Group Center. 2nd SS Panzer roared into Moscow, seizing the undefended city.

Soviet counterattacks were uncoordinated and ineffectual, thereby allowing German reinforcement and expansion. As the spring campaign season opened, German forces assumed the offensive and even managed several drives on Stalingrad. Note that these offensives were based on two Korps from Balashov, but every time they approached the Gates of Stalingrad, Soviet reinforcements rushed in by rail for the defense (shades of the Marne Taxicab Brigades!).

1945: Moscow was retaken by the Soviets in March 1945. It was too little and too late. The German victory point total of 5100 overmatched the Soviet's 2700.

Try to seize Leningrad or Moscow. A day without Moscow is a day without sunshine for the Russian. Yet, do not bleed yourself dry in attaining the objective.

Overambitious plans hold the route to defeat. While Army Group South may appear unopposed, any first year offensive should stop at Odessa or at the most the Dnepropetrovsk River line. While Rostov is attainable, it cannot be held and any units so far east prove easy meat for the Soviet reinforcements.

Army Group Center should progress to the Smolensk-Bryansk-Konotop line and hold.

Analysis of Russian forces in this AO (area of operations) may yield a gradual expansion to Tula-Orelp-Kursk-Kharkov, but such expansion should only be attempted if unopposed. Army Group North should either seize Leningrad or at least invest it.

Ground (artillery)/air support and divisional reinforcements should be maintained in the same percentage as initially shown. While one would like to maintain the same quantitative numbers, such will often prove impossible. Therefore, a similar ratio should suffice. Beware of stripping a Group's assets; they may prove impossible to ever rebuild.

Limited gains can be made by utilizing the Hold/Deploy orders. For example, if a defensive line is maintained at Mariupol, a Main Effort may be made to Sebastopol. Yet, since this city is so far south and generally undefended (?!), all units should be given hold orders except for one which

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A FORESHADOWING OF FANTASY JEWELS IN A DUEL ARCANE:

ULTIMA V and WIZARDRY IV

by Wyatt Lee

As this issue of *Computer Gaming World* goes to press, two of the most long-awaited fantasy role-playing games in history are just reaching the market. Both games are technological advancements over the previous efforts by their designers and both efforts use unique plot twists from earlier games to draw the player into the new fictions. Further, both efforts are designed to affect the player on a psychological level by offering enough stimuli to give the player a chance to study his/her own reactions and decision-making processes from a different viewpoint than is normally taken. It seems a certainty that these designs will provoke discussion and debate beyond the details of gameplay itself.

Since the formidable task of offering detailed reviews of these new games will take some time, this article will attempt to offer a "sneak preview" of both *Ultima V* and *Wizardry IV* based on interviews with the designers and demonstrations of near-production copies. This article will describe the basic fictions of each game, the technological advancements, the game mechanisms, the psychological and ethical implications, and a sense of first impression regarding each game.



The Plots Quicken! (Blackthorn vs. Werdna)

In *Ultima V*, the world has undergone a dramatic and traumatic transformation. The Council of Wizards has turned the volcano from *Ultima IV* upside-down in order to create a shrine for the "Codex of Ultimate Wisdom." This action, in turn, created a hollow shell underground into which all the previously closed dungeons opened up. When a river flows into this newly created "Underworld," this new "frontier" is accidentally discovered. Lord British and his colleagues attempt to explore the "Underworld," but end up disappearing (Voice-over Announcer: "Can this be the end of Lord British? Play the game and see!"). With the disappearance of Lord British , turmoil ensues upon the surface world.

Blackthorn, once a worthy questor striving to become the Avatar, decides that martial law is necessary in order to restore order. His goal of restoring order may have been worthy, but he becomes a virtual Inquisitor in order to seek that goal. He recruits a cabal of Shadowlords to aid him, but the player realizes how low Blackthorn has sunk when you realize that each Shadowlord comprises an "Anti-Virtue" (Falsehood, Hatred, Cowardice, etc.).



The Shadowlords are interesting because they move independently of the player and influence the towns where they visit negatively. For example, if the Shadowlord of Falsehood visits a town before the player character gets there, the player will not get honest answers or information. If the Shadowlord of Cowardice visits, the player may find a town full of fear. Take heart, though. A town is only tainted after the most recent Shadowlord travels through. The anti-virtues are not cumulative. (Hint: If you want to avoid the Shadowlords, pay attention to planetary alignments.)

Wizardry IV offers an even more bizarre plot twist. Subtitled, *The Return of Werdna*, this new adventure turns more than a volcano upside-down. Remember how Werdna, that evil wizard, was destroyed in *Wizardry I: The Proving Grounds of the Mad Overlord*? Remember how the magical amulet was lost? Well, it seems that Werdna's body and spirit were indestructible, after all. So, Trebor and his colleagues imprisoned the "lifeless" body in the deepest part of a dungeon. Yet, the player becomes Werdna in this adventure. As Werdna, you awaken on a cold, stone bier in a small room with no egress. Without amulet or spell book, you have no magical powers. Further, you have neither weapons nor armor to make your survival more tenable. Of course, there is a way out, but that doesn't make the player's job any easier. Instead of fighting one's way down through a dungeon in order to confront the villain or gain the artifact, *Wizardry IV* forces the player to fight his way up and out of the dungeon/tomb in order to gain revenge and regain his amulet. The psychological benefits of playing an evil character will be discussed later in the article, but the actual dungeon is designed around ten different themes and episodes (each on a different dungeon level) which seek to challenge the player for different psychological reactions.

That's not all there is to the "mirror" effect of the dungeon, however. Instead of fighting monsters, the player (as Werdna) conjures monsters to fight against more than 500 actual *Wizardry* player characters. In fact, if you have ever sent a character disk back to Sir-Tech (for repair or to show you've solved the game), your charac-

ter may be in this game. Further, the Wizardry characters are joined together as distinctive teams (like "Horin's Holy Rollers," sort of the "God Squad"?), each with their distinct battlecry.

Ultimate Technological Wizardry?

Wizardry IV is graphically a positive step forward. It still has the same 3-D dungeon corridor atmosphere, but the combat screen graphics are much improved over previous adventures. Each opponent appears in color and the graphics subtly change to indicate the experience/prowess level of the enemies. One playtester, Ronald Wartow, has suggested that there are more than triple the number of graphics than in any prior *Wizardry* adventure. There are even atmosphere screens which depict wide-angle views at some locations.

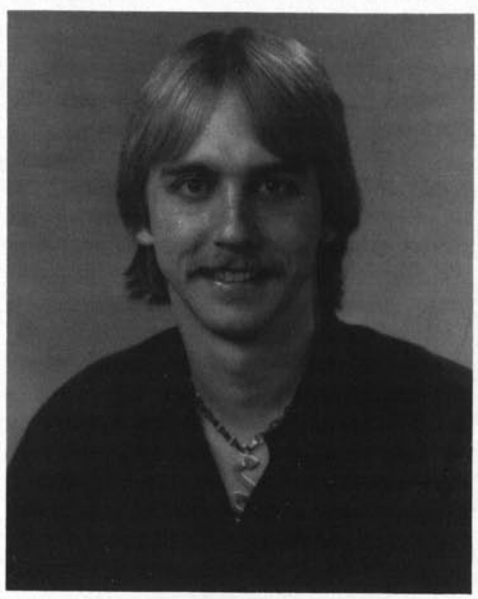
Also, since this is an "expert" level dungeon, the game keeps track of your progress toward a successful ending (there are several) by monitoring the number of keystrokes. This "bookkeeping" feature is potentially useful in monitoring one's general progress and aiding one's time/resource management. If one can finish an optimal path in less than the usual number of keystrokes, Sir-Tech will grant a Grand Master Adventurer Certificate.

Most significant, though, is the ability to "SAVE GAME" when one is actually in a dungeon (one could not in previous adventures). Even here, however, there is a trade-off, because the player-characters who oppose Werdna are reset and must be reconquered after the "SAVE GAME" feature is used.

The bulk of the entire *Wizardry* series is now being constructed on a Japanese MS-DOS machine. Even the Apple II version was programmed on this machine and runs on the Apple via an Apple II Pascal interpreter emulator. What this means for the consumer is that *Wizardry* will soon be available on all formats (excluding Atari 800) and after these formats "catch up," the newer *Wizardry* releases will come out simultaneously in all formats, even in Japan. In fact, "Werdna"



Wizardry's Roe Adams & Robert Woodhead



Ultima V's "Lord British"

is coming out in Japan before the end of the year. The graphics, on the other hand, are generated on the Macintosh Plus at **Sir-Tech** by using the Mac's ability to emulate other machine's graphics. The Mac is able to keep track of several machines at once via various windows.

In *Ultima V*, the ambiance is familiar, but the technology is new. This is because Lord British starts from scratch on the technological design with each new scenario. In the latest adventure, there are eight disk sides required to hold the world data. It is the same surface of the world for Britannia, but there are twice as many towns as before (32 vs. 16) and an average of two stories per town. Lord British used a new operating system (Origin Systems calls it Dinky DOS) in this game and it has enabled several advances to take place.

The graphics are not "blocky" as in the past. There are softer edges on the terrain features and the design utilizes 512 different graphic tiles to create terrain. The shading/color is richer because the program uses a flood fill instead of line-of-sight fill. In all, the program offers three distinctively different styles of drawn dungeons.

Beyond these features, other changes have been wrought, such as the addition of the sun and moon on the horizon line to show time passing (a la *Moebius*) and the fact that it gets DARK at night in the game. The "Slow Movement" command is also different in that it no longer slows the game down, but gives the monsters an extra shot, instead.

The gameplay mechanics in *Ultima V* have been made much simpler because the player can designate an ACTIVE character. Until that character is deACTIVated, that character is the one searching, opening, unlocking, etc. No longer does the program have to ask who is doing what. Further ease of play is assured by the fact that the commands in the game are banked subroutines, a fancy way of saying that commands which are generally used together are stored together for ease of access.

The latest *Ultima* uses a new interface by presenting a window with scroll bars and a running inventory. Perhaps of most interest is the new combat system. Like many new adventures, the game will offer ranged weapons. Unlike most systems, the combat will use dexterity as a speed counter and create order out of the usual chaos of combat. Finally, *Ultima*

V is like *Wizardry IV* in that the game can be saved ANYWHERE, even in the dungeons.

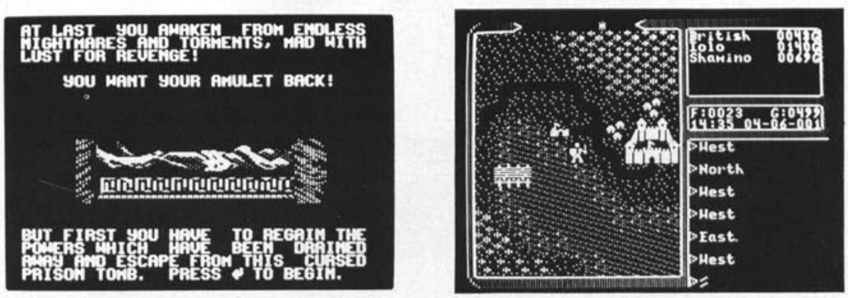
The Play Is The Thing!

Gameplay is similar, but more advanced, in both adventures. In *Ultima V*, magical potions are created by means of the same reagents (i.e. ash = energy/ ginseng = healing) as its predecessor. Casting spells is slightly different. Some incantations are the same as in the earlier magic book, but some new ones remain to be discovered. The incantations are built on syllabic combinations (pseudo-Latin roots with a little bit of Greek thrown in) which are added together in a logical way to form a "spell." If anyone is concerned, these incantations do not reflect real occultic practices or incantations. They are fiction created by the designer. For example, **Flam** = flame, **Vas** = big, and **In** = create. Therefore, **In Vas Flam** would mean "Create a large fireball!"

Further, a new character class, the Avatar, has been added. Only one Avatar is allowed in the game and may be transferred into the game from *Ultima IV* or created especially for the new adventure. In order to accomodate the new combat system, however, all characters transferred from the previous game will be converted down to a 30 point scale.

Monster-generation is very different in the new adventure. Now, random encounters are keyed to time and location. For example, there may be a two in thirty chance of encounter off-road in the daylight, but that is doubled to four in thirty at night. Other refinements include the addition of ranged combat, the removal of "real-time" combat because the decisions players must make are more strategic, the addition of a subroutine where the consumption of alcoholic beverage has an effect on dexterity, and the use of a Kharma counter as opposed to the eight characteristics measured in the last adventure.

Wizardry IV is advertised, marketed, and designed as an EXPERT LEVEL dungeon. Roe Adams, *Wizardry IV*'s



Screen Shots of Werdna's Bier & Lord British's Castle

designer, describes the operative rule in the game's design by stating, "It doesn't matter how difficult something is, as long as it's *fair!*" Robert Woodhead, *Wizardry IV*'s programmer, insists that one must "...think sideways to do well in this game." As in previous offerings in this series, each level in broken down into three strategic elements: mapping, "hack n' slash", and puzzle-solving. As opposed to the previous releases, characters increase strength by means of puzzle-solving rather than "hack n' slash." Puzzles are non-linear and multi-level (you may have to go back to another level to get something you missed). Don't expect a great deal of game help in the manual, either. The manual is almost totally dedicated to the story line, so you will need to have the rulebooks from previous *Wizardrys*.

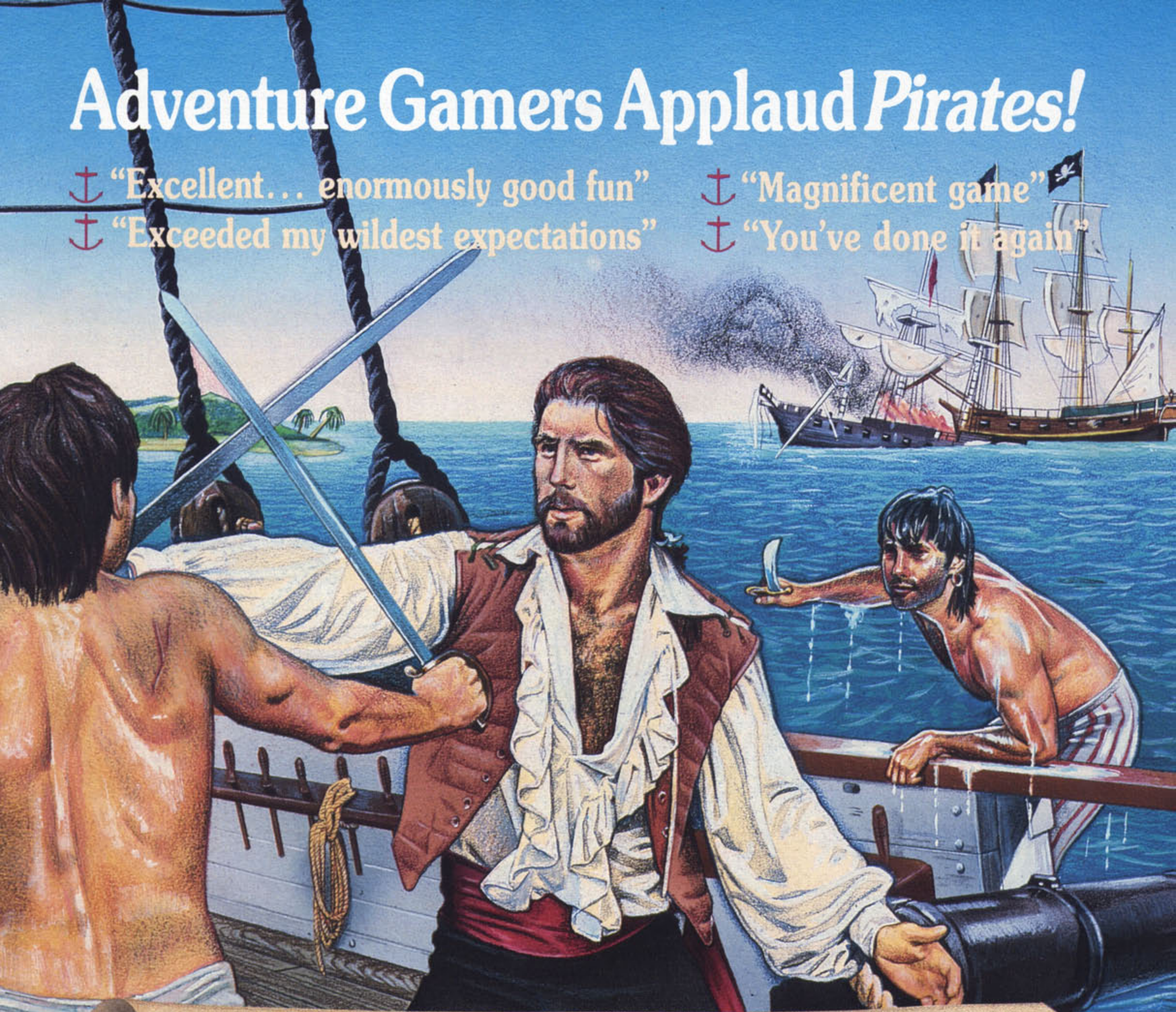
Additional features include the fact that there are a fixed number of encounters per level, that the thieves actually steal from your party, and each level has a distinctive name and theme. Esoterica is alive and well throughout the latest *Wizardry*, especially in terms of cryptic names and puns. *[Ed. - I'll give an official CGW "no prize" to the first reader who can identify "The Red S . . . ."]* Game balance is carefully crafted and considered. There are, at least, 100 special items (artifacts) to keep players mesmerized. In addition, an intriguing help feature has been added. Watch out for the *Oracle of Mron*, alleged to be Norm Sirotek's (one of Sir-Tech's owner/executives) name spelled backward. Norm...er...Mron gives hints at the low, low cost of 10,000 gold per hint and the program keeps track of which hints you've already purchased (unless, of course, you happen to save the game in between hints - that's part of the "save game" trade-off).

Finally, "Werdna" has a problem that hasn't ever plagued *Wizardry* players, before. The monsters which he (the player) conjures perform on "auto-pilot," as it were. Combat can be very exciting when your monsters occasionally hurt YOU when they are casting their spells.

Ethics: Psychadelics or Psychometrics?

The idea of playing an evil character in *Wizardry IV: The Return of Werdna* may have a perverse appeal to some people, but it immediately causes one to think about the ethical implications. When asked about this, Roe Adams chuckled and said, "You have to understand, Werdna is evil, but not chaotic!" From there, both Adams and Woodhead claimed that there is lots of philosophy in the product. It seems that the purpose of the product is not to provide a satisfaction in being and playing an "evil" character, but to offer a therapeutic *tour de force* of the darker emotions that humans are prone to. Each level, designed like a different episode of *The Prisoner* (a British television series starring Patrick McGoohan as the protagonist who attempted to outwit the faceless bureaucracy of The Company in a world without rules), is in-

Continued on page 62



"**PIRATES!** *is excellent . . . a great swashbuckling game,* **enormously good fun . . .** *it should keep you playing for months."*
(Popular Computing Weekly, U.K.)

". . . your game has **exceeded my wildest expectations . . .** *I have run up more game time on the computer in 3 days than in the entire month previous."* **(C.J.M., Buffalo, N.Y.)**

"This is one of the most **magnificent games** *I have ever had the pleasure of playing! It has exactly the balance of realism, playability and silliness that I most adore."* **(J.P.S., San Diego, CA)**

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OUTFOXED IN THE DESERT

Simulations Canada's "Rommel At Gazala"

by Johnny L. Wilson

NAME:	Rommel At Gazala
SYSTEMS:	Apple II, IBM
# PLAYERS:	1-2
PRICE:	$59.95
DESIGNER:	Stephen St. John
PUBLISHER:	Simulations Canada Bridgewater, Nova Scotia

Operation Aberdeen, "Operation Buckshot," and "The Cauldron" are names that conjure images of some of the most fierce fighting during the North African campaign of 1942. Simulations Canada's new *Rommel At Gazala (RAG)* is a fascinating study of the "Desert Fox's" Tobruk campaign (May 26-June 27, 1942). As such, it simulates some factors well and other factors poorly.

In appearance, the game physically resembles other Simulations Canada games. The packaging, as well as the cardboard counters, resemble the SPI classics of boardgaming's past. The cover makes limited use of color, but is of interest because it uses Rommel's own sketch map for flanking Bir Hacheim. The documentation is succinct to the point of sparseness for the beginning to intermediate gamer, but is adequate for those who subscribe to the SimCan design philosophy. The burden of research rests on the gamer, since SimCan restricts their historical research to their design and shares as little of the design considerations as possible with the gamer/purchaser. Nevertheless, their basic philosophy is that there is considerably more "fog of war" in the process of conducting military operations than gamers have hitherto recognized.

Beauty and the Beast

Here is both part of the beauty of *RAG* and part of the problem with the game system. The beauty is that "fog of war" played a vital factor in the Gazala/Tobruk struggle. According to Michael Carver's 1964 work, *Tobruk*, Norrie actually had the bulk of the Deutsche Afrika Korps surrounded with Lumsden's 1st Armored Division on May 27, but the Allies neither realized this nor the fact that they almost captured Rommel during the afternoon. On the same day, Rommel was sweeping the southern anchor of the Gazala line (Bir Hacheim) when a British officer reported: "Looks like a brigade of Jerry tanks coming." Later, the same officer realized that this was a more significant movement, "It's more than a brigade--it's the whole bloody Afrika Korps!" The typical SimCan design exploits the uncertainty which both commanders experienced during the campaign. You can only tell where the enemy is when they are attacking.



Yet, even though the game effectively illustrates the confusing feel of this unusual campaign, the "fog of war" in this product, as in other SimCan publications, may be carried to an unnecessary extreme. St. John has deliberately abstracted aerial reconnaissance to the point where it isn't even specifically mentioned in the game. The documentation does handle the issue by stating, "Operations and decisions that these high level officers would not deal with directly or have direct knowledge of, will be handled automatically by the computer. The results of such actions as might be known to these officers will be reported to the players while information not used by officers at this level or unavailable due to the situation will not be reported." (1.0). In effect, each player knows where the other commander's high level headquarters units are as a result of aerial reconnaissance. Yet, Anthony Heckstall-Smith quotes a survivor of the campaign as saying, "Every day our reconnaissance planes returned to report rapidly growing concentrations of enemy vehicles west of Gazala." (*Tobruk*, p. 204). Except for when the *khamsins* (dust storms) came and took out the visibility of the aircraft, both sides had a fairly good idea of relative strength. In *RAG*, this relativity covers a multitude of tanks and this can be a "beastly" problem to overcome.

The Fox and the Grants

RAG offers some valid lessons about the struggle with the "Desert Fox" which have not been effectively addressed by other games. First, the game design uniquely demonstrates the lack of "front lines." Neither side has sufficient units to establish a contiguous line, so the deployment turns out to be highly mobile forces opposing a series of forts or "boxes." The game play discourages consolidation to fortified positions so familiar in other theatres of war, since it would have been so easy to outflank and cut off supply (as essentially happened at both Tobruk and Bir Hacheim).

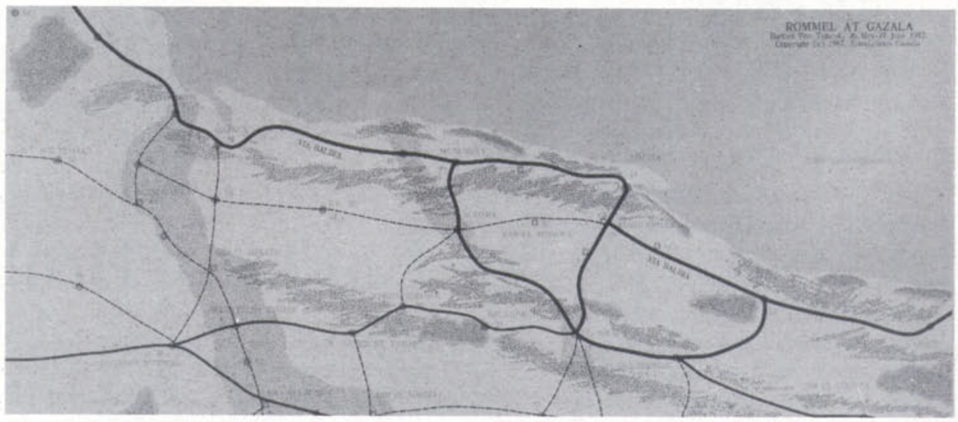
Second, the game design forces the player/commanders to become cognizant of the power of supply. Supply levels are highly significant in *RAG*, since no supply shipments arrive during the game. Errors in supply allotment through undue parsimony or profligate extravagance can easily decide the campaign's success or failure. The chances for a successful attack or defense hinge upon good supp-

ly allotments. Unfortunately, this is also part of the "fuzziness" of the design. The documentation is not clear as to how the lines of supply are drawn. Players can regularly win decisive battles, only to discover that the program considers them "out of supply" and "out of the line of command" after doing so. Of course, the player cannot even order a withdrawal, advance, or defense after this occurs, even if he "relieves" the units by clearing out the area around the location.

Another significant lesson to be learned from *RAG* is that constant, even uncoordinated, attacks are more effective than attempts to concentrate forces in order to obtain a major objective. General Auchinleck has often been criticized for his decision to force the First and Seventh Armored Divisions to fight as divisions rather than as an awesome combined force. The documentation of *RAG* addresses this by stating, "In playtests, concentrating the British armour to meet the D.A.K. with superior numbers rarely worked. One of two results were usual: D.A.K. would bypass the British armour to obtain telling results elsewhere (often by taking Tobruk or Gambut) or D.A.K. would fight a defensive battle that left both sides decimated, . . ." (9.5). This reviewer experienced the same results, but would offer a *caveat* at this point.

The design of *RAG* itself does not take into consideration the possibility of combined attacks. One can make allowances for travel time, order the assault to take place from the same direction at the same time by two or more units, and discover that the program only figures the results piecemeal. The First Armored Division can have the enemy attempting to retreat, but the Seventh Armored Division will receive heavy casualties and only inflict light casualties on the enemy, rather than combining its attack with the First Division or finishing the job started by the former. Since the design does not, in effect, combine either the numerical strength of the attacks nor the results of the attacks, it seems to be "begging the question" to make such an assertion. What the design does accomplish, however, is a positive appreciation for the difficulty Lumsden and Messervy experienced by being forced to operate separately.

Finally, the historical wargamer may find himself somewhat shocked by the opening intelligence report with its estimates of enemy strength as opposed to his own strength. When playing the Allies, I was shocked at being outnumbered by Rommel's tanks. In actuality, Rommel had approximately 560 tanks opposing Ritchie's circa 843 tanks. When playing the Allies, it was regularly reported to me that Rommel had 97 strength points in tanks as opposed to my 87 strength points in tanks. It turns out that this is how the program handles the differences in quality between the German and Allied tanks. Allied shells regularly bounced off the superior armor of the German tanks and the German tanks had a larger effective range than those of the Allies. Even when the American *Grant* tanks arrived with their 75 millimeter guns, they did not have enough traverse to be effective against the forces of the "Desert Fox." Therefore, the superior numbers given to the Axis represent superior quality.



Rommel's Steel Skin

All in all, *RAG* is the Axis' game to lose. The tightly organized and small, effective divisions of the D.A.K. are superior to the Allies diverse and inferior forces. Therefore, it is most challenging to play the Allied side after one masters the system. The game is particularly effective as a historical tutorial on armored command strategy in the desert war and offers new insights from an emotional perspective on the problems of command.

There are satisfactions in playing this hybrid between a computer game and "boardgame" which balance out the inherent problems. Though the game may mitigate against certain tactics by design, it certainly offers a challenging strategic opponent. Though the game lacks graphics, there is a pleasure in moving cardboard counters across a game map without having to do the attendant bookkeeping or reference the "Combat Results Table."

SimCan's designs with their emphasis on "fog of war" are definitely not for the beginning or intermediate wargamer. They offer a steep learning curve and high frustration level until one is initiated into their system. Once this orientation has occurred, however, one can play through *RAG* in an hour to an hour and one-half with ease. Further, their designs offer an advanced and sophisticated challenge beyond the chrome of other systems. Nevertheless, this reviewer would like to know a little more about why certain events occur and to discover more about what happened in a completed battle than SimCan's designs usually share during the turn's debriefing (Intelligence Report).

RAG is a successful utilization of the SimCan design philosophy, but whether it is worth the price is dependent upon whether you buy into that philosophy or not. At least, the specialized requirements of this model fit the SimCan design better than most of their land-based games.

The Lurking Horror

by Scorpia

Ah, it's that time of year again: when the frost is on the punkin, and ghosties and ghoulies slip through the foggy October nights. Of course, I shouldn't keep you standing at the door (never know what might be creeping up behind you, eh?). Step in and get cozy by the fireplace. While you're warming up, we can talk about term papers and even more unpleasant things.

Lurking Horror is an authentic horror story, Lovecraftian hi-tech with Stephen King overtones. The monsters are very real and very nasty. While there is nothing shockingly gruesome (after all, this is Infocom), the game does have some unsettling parts (finding a severed hand, for instance), so be prepared.



One thing you won't find, however, is a complete explanation for what is going on. There are some hints and implications, but they don't really cover everything that happens in the game. Don't expect it all to be be neatly tied up at the end because much will be left shrouded in mystery.

The game begins in a raging blizzard. Outside, freezing winds whip through deserted streets, blowing heavy snow into huge drifts. Inside, you hunker over a computer screen in the terminal room of GUE Tech, trying to finish a term paper due tomorrow. Tomorrow may never come.

Somehow, files have gotten crossed up in the computer system, and what you see on your screen has nothing to do with your paper. Pages of only partly-intelligible text scroll before your eyes and the readable parts give you a distinctly eerie feeling. An illustration pops up that causes you to faint outright and have a nightmare (?).

Fortunately, you wake up from that to find yourself still (again?) in the computer room, although the screen is now an illegible mess. A friendly hacker (in the original sense of the word) does what he can, but it appears that your term paper file has been lost. Oh well, maybe the people in the Alchemy Department (whose files were mixed in with yours) can help you out. Now the fun begins (hehehe).

Of course, wandering through a nearly-deserted university in the wee hours of the morning may not seem like fun to you, especially when you recall certain rumors you've heard. That paper has to be finished, though. There's nothing for it but to get a move on and visit the Alchemy Department.

However, I'd recommend some initial explorations of the college before running off to the Alchemy Department. The elevator and the basement are definitely worth investigating. There are so many interesting things to find down there. I hope you have a light source with you (there's one nearby, if you look in the right place) and are able to hang on to some of the items you find as you go through the game. Some of them are useful in more places than one.

During your explorations, you'll probably run into the urchin. He has no business (no legitimate business, anyway) in the college. You won't be able to deal with him for awhile, so ignore him when he shows up. Just don't drop anything while he's around. Later on, you'll be able to give him a hand and get something in return.

One of the more unpleasant areas down below is the steam tunnel, which happens to be filled with voracious rats. They aren't interested in junk food; only fresh meat (you) will satisfy their hunger. It'll take some violence and a quick turn to get rid of them.

Also tucked away underneath the college is something that looks very much like an altar. With a few suspicious stains on it. I wouldn't recommend either lingering around here or opening anything.

When you're done with the underground for the present, a visit to the Aerospace Building is in order. You'll need to stroll through the Infinite Corridor (not really infinite, just long) to reach the Alchemy Department. Unfortunately, that may not be as easy as it sounds. A rather zombie-like maintenance man with a floor waxer seems intent on blocking your progress.

There's no way around him; he'll block your every move to get past. On the other hand, since he's waxing the floor, eventually he'll start moving away, allowing you to go a bit further down the corridor each time. But he's still in front of you, and as long as that's the case, you won't be able to get where you want to go.

What you have to do here is get his attention. It'll take some sharp action on your part to accomplish that. Naturally, the maintenance man will not be pleased, and his reactions are going to be a trifle violent, possibly even deadly. You'll have to stay on your toes and move fast; one little slip is all it takes. . . .

When the maintenance man is no longer an obstacle, you'll have clear passage to other areas of the college. However, before you go running off, you may wish to investigate the great dome. Strange, how the ladder up to the catwalk is nowhere to be seen, but it seems someone left a rope hanging down that you can climb up. Then again, maybe this isn't exactly a rope. Climb with care.

Luckily for you, what you find up on the catwalk doesn't stick around. However, you're not up here to sight-see (even if you have been seeing some pretty strange sights lately), so keep going until you're out in the cold and up on the dome (just don't stay too long out there).

Back inside, it's time for a visit to the Brown Building, or more specifically, the weather station on top of it (don't worry, you'll be getting to the Alchemy Department soon enough). Just walk up to the roof (sorry, this elevator isn't working, but it's a quick trip by the stairs) and out yet again into the cold.

At least it's warm inside the station . . . errrr . . . did you hear something out there? Uh-oh. Something IS out there, and it doesn't look friendly. And it isn't staying out there, either, it's on it's way inside. Gulp!

Maybe this is not the best place to be at the moment. Nowhere to run, nowhere to hide . . . you get the idea. Best to make tracks while you can. EEK! You just ran right into the thing! You're in trouble now!



The Infinite Corridor Connecting the Aero and Chem Buildings

You've got to do something about this, quickly. Whatever the creature is, it isn't natural, and natural means won't stop it. If only you had something that was supernatural.....

Whew! That was a close call, fer sure! Yet, there must have been some reason for that thing to be hanging around here. This calls for another investigation of the weather station.

Finally, it's time to visit (at last) the Alchemy Department. No, your key won't work on the door, but I'll bet there's someone inside, even at this time of night.

While the professor lets you in, he doesn't seem especially interested in you. You also notice he's reluctant to allow you into the lab (why, I wonder?). There isn't much to see in the office, except for the sign-up sheet. Maybe you should take a look at that. Maybe you could show the professor something that would change his attitude.

Then again, perhaps that was not the wisest thing to do. Because now you're in the lab, magically (?) imprisoned in a pentagram, while the professor stands inside another. He's not just standing there, either. He's calling for something and something is definitely on its way. Something much nastier than anything you've seen yet and you don't want to be here when it arrives. Trust me.

If you thought you had to move fast before, that's nothing compared to how fast you have to move now. You can't afford any wasted movements here. You must get out of the pentagram, and out of the room, before the thing fully materializes. Breaking the pentagram is the only way, and only one particular item will do the job. Otherwise, you'll end up sacrificing yourself, in a very unpleasant manner.

When things have finally settled down in the lab, do go back and check out what's left. The vat in particular is commended to your attention. You'll find it a very handy item.

There is, however, some more to be done (as you probably noticed from the score). The end of the professor does not mean an end to the horrors. One more part of the underground area needs to be explored. There's just one little problem, though. Some of the things you have to bring with you won't pass through the narrow crack in the wall. Which brings us back to the reinforcing rod in the steam tunnel. What do you suppose might be on the other side, behind the brick wall? Look at your map, and see if anything occurs to you. Perhaps you've heard the sound of machinery from the other side...what might be operating at this time of night yet? It could be worth investigating!

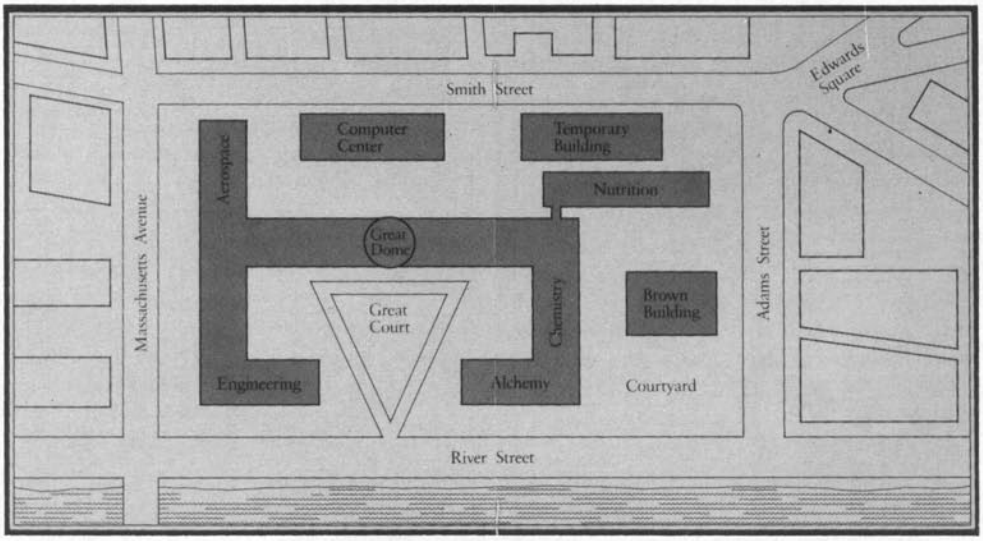
Ok, now you're ready for the final confrontation, although you'll have to get by a few nasty places first along the way. One is the hatchery. This should not much of a problem, actually, since the beings here won't attack. However, you must disable them to get further, and it's a simple matter of being a cut-up.

Now it's down into the maze of wet tunnels. A very confusing place, where you could wander lost for quite some time, without a helping hand. Does that ring any bells?

Moving along, you come to . . . slime. Horrible stuff, slime. It will eat through anything and get on anything that comes too close. Good thing you have the means to deal with it.

Look over your inventory for something you haven't used, yet. Keep your cool, and the slime will cease to be an obstacle.

At last, you penetrate to the inner chamber, and what appears to be the central focus of the evil permeating the college. As before, time is again short. The metal box is the key to victory; make sure you read the description of the interior with great care. The right connection will lead to a shocking experience, and put an end to the lurking horror . . . maybe . . . .



Whew! The things you have to do to get a term paper done. Bet you never thought college could be like this (grin)! Well, it usually isn't unless you happen to attend George Underwood Edwards (GUE) Tech. Maybe it's time to think of transferring elsewhere; the Space Patrol is looking for a few good people (oh, Floyd...).

Well, that about does it for this issue. In the meantime, if you need help with an adventure game, you can reach me in the following ways:

On Delphi: visit the GameSIG (under the Groups and Clubs menu). On GEnie: stop by the Games Roundtable (type: Scorpia to reach the Games RT). On The Source: send Smail to ST1030. By US Mail: (Remember to enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope if you live in the United States) Scorpia, PO Box 338, Gracie Station, NY NY 10028.

Until next time, happy adventuring!



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TITLE:	EOS
SYSTEMS:	Apple II (C-64 soon)
# PLAYERS:	One to four
PRICE:	$34.95
DESIGNER:	Karl Buiter
PUBLISHER:	Electronic Arts San Mateo, CA

EOS Earth Orbit Stations

by Gregg Williams

EOS (Earth Orbit Stations) is one of the most interesting **Electronic Arts** games to be published this year. It is a captivating simulation of space exploration that is a game of logistics, of making the technical decisions needed to achieve your goal and the business decisions needed to keep your fleet of EOS's alive commercially.

Baby Steps from Planet Earth

EOS does not simulate humankind's swaggering conquest of The Universe. Instead, it speculates about our first laborious steps from the cradle of our species. EA says that the seven replayable scenarios of EOS take from 2 to 40 hours to finish, and I can believe them. They range from Research (short beginner's game) to Search for Life (explore the solar system with manned ships and unmanned probes, looking for life gulp). All but the first will take many hours, so be prepared to use the save-game feature.

An EOS turn, which represents a 3-month period of time, is pretty unstructured. It consists largely of reading the news and other indicators of economic activity, buying modules for your EOS's (up to 32), changing the prices you charge for your services, and deciding which modules will produce income (to support your EOS's) and research (needed before you can build advanced modules).

You build each EOS within a complex set of requirements and limitations. Each EOS must have enough power, human labor, life-support, and money to support all its modules. You must also read economic conditions on Earth correctly and price your services to sell as close to 100% of them as possible. If you can anticipate which sectors of the market will be most profitable, you can build modules to meet their needs (and make much-needed money).



Quadruplets in Space

So far, I've been talking mainly about a solitaire game without computer or human opponents. You can add any mixture of 1-3 human and computer opponents at any time (one nice touch is the ability to get the computer to take over a human opponent's role if necessary). Having more than one player brings in the problems of competition--now multiple players bid to sell their production to a market that may have a limited need for a given product. With three or four human players, you even have some possibilities for alliances, backstabbing, price wars, and so on. However, I'm not sure how much of that would actually happen--the simulation is so complex, I'm not sure I'd be confident enough to go out of my way just to befriend or thwart another player.

This brings me to a key question: how does EOS play as a multiple (human) player game? I tried it only once with another dedicated games enthusiast, so my experience is limited. My experience indicates, though, that it is not really suited for multiple players. First, the game has a steep learning curve, so most people won't bother. Second, beginners may take as much as 10 to 20 minutes to figure out their first moves, which means a *lot* of waiting for the uninvolved players in a four-player game.

There may be a solution, though. Since all the players need to read through certain data, you could do one sweep of the data and allow all the players to take notes. Then, they can probably work on deciding on their moves while other players are placing theirs.

Design Problems

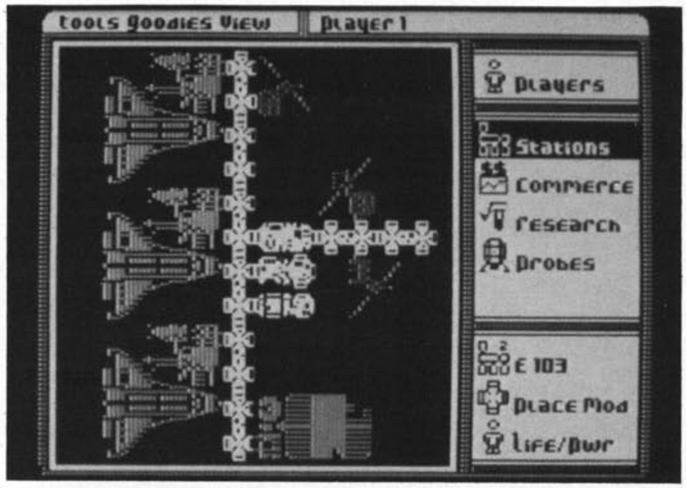
This brings me to the unpleasant, but important, task of talking about EOS's faults. Basically, the game has a large number of small faults that are significant only when taken together. Once you learn the program's quirks, they don't cause you much grief--but they do make the process of learning the game harder than it should be.

The most important problem is EOS's human interface. It is versatile in its ability to be played using either the keyboard or a joystick, but the good news ends there. You must navigate a confusing patchwork of menus to get the data you need and make the moves you want to make, it's a textbook case of how *not* to design a window/menu/graphics interface. Several times, I remember wanting a certain screen of data I had seen before and not being able to find it. For example, the

"Life/Power" screen (which shows resource utilization on a given EOS) was sometimes visible as an item on the main "Tools" menu, sometimes not.

I finally discovered that the game adds or subtracts the menu item depending on whether or not you have selected a specific EOS to work on. Fair enough, but then, I found that using the "Commerce" or "Research" items on that menu invisibly kicks you from being "in" a specific EOS to being "out" of it, all with *no* indication you have changed your mode.

The documentation is cryptic, scant, and poorly organized. I puzzled over how to get things done in this game and often learned by experimentation. The game allows you to choose options that are invalid for you at that moment, then does nothing. This forces you to puzzle out why the action did not go through. In the screen where you pick which EOS you want to work in, a message says, "pay loan and have 250@ for new station," where



"@" is a cryptic symbol that is not readable even on a monochrome monitor (obviously a bug). I have at least a half-dozen small, annoying complaints that I don't have the space to list here. The author of the game, Karl Buiter, has an excuse.It's his first commercial game (and it's an excellent showing as such), but to be truthful, we have come to expect better interfacing and game flow from EA.

Although it took me a while to get into this game, once I did, the hours evaporated. Say, if anybody finds life out there, let me know, okay?

TEVEX Computer Software

ACCESS

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Tenth Frame			$28	$31	$28
Triple Pack	$15	$15	$15		
World Class LB	$28		$28	$31	
"Course Disks	$15		$15		

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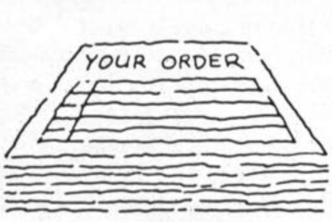
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"Zhitomir, July 28. We occupied the town some days ago. Perhaps I am exaggerating when I call it a town, because all we have seen are miles and miles of ruins, and again ruins."
. . . Peter Neumann, Waffen SS, The Black March



by William H. Harrington

TITLE:	Guderian
SYSTEMS:	Apple II, Atari, C-64,
# PLAYERS:	1-2
PRICE:	$30.00
DESIGNERS:	Dyadic Software
PUBLISHER:	Avalon Hill Baltimore, MD

Briefing: (The Historical Perspective)

Guderian recreates the great German drive on the strategic city of Smolensk in western Russia during that fateful summer of 1941. At that point, Hitler's *Wehrmacht* turned east and General Heinz Guderian, the father of the *blitzkrieg* led the long black lines of panzers in a race across the Russian steppes. By mid-summer, the Soviet Army had been decimated, the Soviet Air Force had been swept from the skies, and Stalin's weary soldiers had begun their desperate stand on the Stalin Line. The easy victories were behind the Germans, now. Beyond Smolensk and the Soviet Army lay Moscow and final victory. History records that the Soviets lost the great battle of Smolensk, yet they won enough time to ensure that as Guderian's *Panzergruppe* began the final drive on Moscow, the leaves had begun to fall and General "Winter" and the reinforcements from far-off Siberia would stand between the Germans and Moscow.

Logistics Report (The Game Components/Interface)

Guderian comes packaged in the conventional **Avalon Hill** game box with art work suspiciously reminiscent of **Avalon Hill**'s popular board game on the same subject. The game contains a well-written manual and full color map card to help provide a strategic overview. The interface allows either keyboard or joystick control, a choice of three difficulty levels, and optional sound effects. Further, *Guderian* does allow use of an accelerator card on the **Apple** version, but requires keyboard input when an accelerator card is utilized. Note also that while games can be saved to disk, players have to format their own disks and only one game can be saved to a single disk.

Reconnaissance Report (Game Mechanics)

Guderian is a strategic/divisional level game with the system based on the design used in **Avalon Hill**'s *Gulf Strike*. There are twelve turns in the game, representing the historical length of the Battle for Smolensk by having each turn reflect two complete days of action. Turns are divided into Movement and Combat Phases. The battlefield is a 58 x 30 grid where each square represents 10.5 kilometers. Terrain types include: clear, forests, rivers, victory squares (actually large cities which confer victory points in the game), minor cities, swamps, lakes, roads, railroads, and rail bridges. Available units for deployment include: armor, infantry, mechanized infantry, cavalry (Don't laugh, but the German Cavalry unit in this game doesn't run out of gas. It runs out of oats!), and leaders. This last unit type is only available to the Soviet player and each unit represents one general, his staff, and a small, armed, headquarters contingent.

As would be expected, each unit's movement allowances are affected according to terrain encountered. In addition, all German mechanized units have an additional movement phase during game turns to simulate the greater mobility and command control enjoyed by the Wehrmacht during the beginning of the War in the East. The more rigid Soviet command structure is simulated by requiring Soviet units to have a Leader unit within the Zone of Control in order to launch attacks and remain in supply.

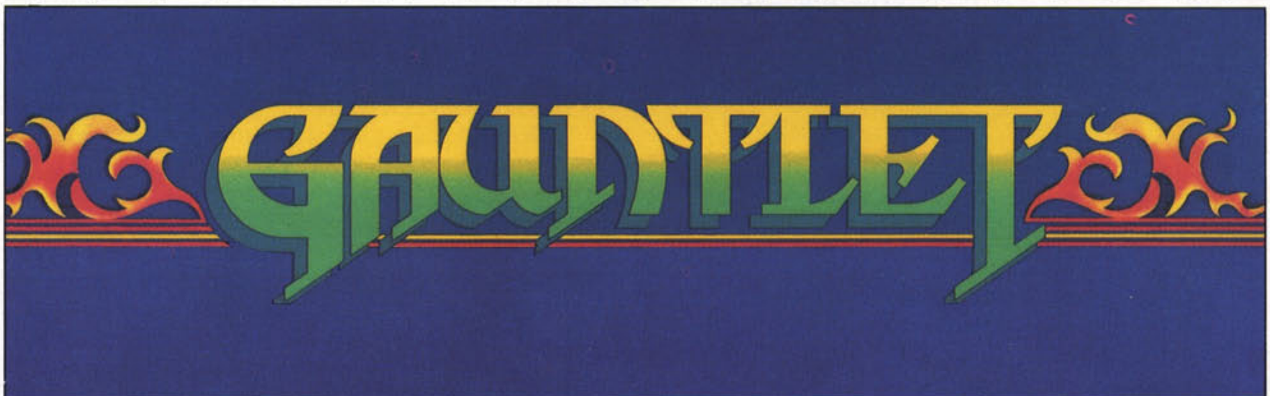
The most innovative unit feature in *Guderian* may be the unknown quality of Soviet Divisions. This is even true for the Soviet player! During the initial German invasion, the capabilities of the individual Soviet units was problematic at best. The effects of Stalin's purges of the Officer Corp in the 1930's, humiliation of the short-lived Soviet-Finnish War in the previous year, and poor leadership in general made it virtually impossible to predict how an individual Soviet unit would respond to combat. Some fought with near fanatic devotion, while others surrendered in vast numbers. *Guderian* elegantly simulates this by hiding the attack and defense strengths of individual Soviet units until they actually enter combat.

The game system really shines, though, in the movement system. By using either joystick or keyboard, players may select up to three individual units and stack them into a particular square. That isn't the positive factor. However, players may then elect to move the entire stack as a whole. This is not only more con-

Continued on page 61

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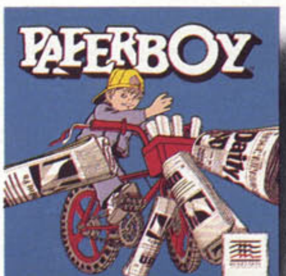


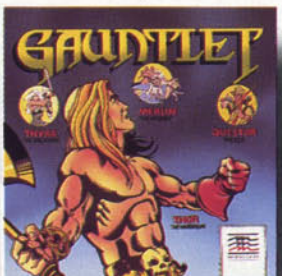
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Rebel Charge at Chickamauga

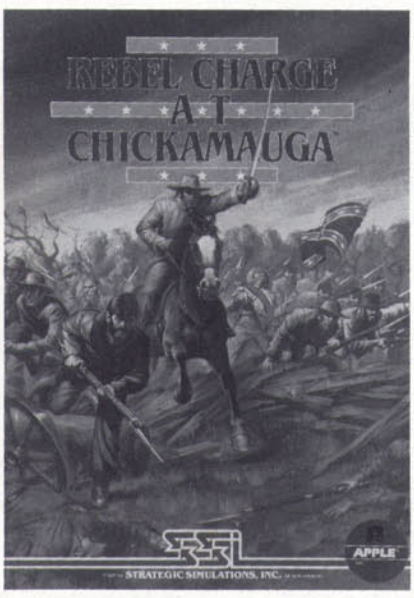
"Make The Right Wing Strong"

by M. Evan Brooks (c) 1987

Name:	Rebel Charge At Chickamauga
Systems:	Atari (8-bit), C-64, Apple
Price:	$59.95
Designer:	Chuck Kroegel
Publisher:	Strategic Simulations Mountain View, CA

Introduction

Rebel Charge at Chickamauga (hereinafter *Chickamauga*) is **SSI**'s latest Civil War release, following *Antietam* and *Gettysburg*. The game system is very similar, with the documentation helpfully pointing out the differences from its predecessors. For those unfamiliar with the system, turns represent two hours during which the Confederate player moves and attacks. Then, the Union follows. Mid-turn recovery is followed by another series of moves and attacks which complete the game turn.



The primary changes are in turn duration (two hours instead of one), woods movement (attacking units have a random chance of achieving a 50% success modifier while defenders have the same chance of being "outmaneuvered"), brigade-sized units (the player now has the choice of breaking down into demi-brigades), and retreats (they now occur after both fire and melee phases).

Chickamauga offers the opportunity to play either side (or neither, permitting one to observe the computer and learn from its play). With basic, intermediate and advanced options, the degree of difficulty may be layered on with respect to the player's expertise.

Historically, the Battle of Chickamauga is noted for the fact that the South actually outnumbered the North in manpower. As Northern forces diverged in order to seize Tennessee, Southern forces under Braxton Bragg attempted to defeat the Union in detail. Finally, recognizing his weakness, Union General Rosecrans began to congregate his forces. On September 19-20, 1863, battle occurred. The first day was a bloody draw. The South did not achieve a breakthrough, but the North had been hard-pressed. The second day was critical. Through a set of misunderstood orders, a divisional-sized hole was left in Union lines just as a Confederate assault began. Blasting its way through the Union flank, Southern forces seemed poised for victory. However, Union XIV Corps Commander, George Thomas, forged a make-shift defense, utilizing anything and everything available. Somehow, he was able to establish a defensive line and permit the Northern forces to withdraw in good order (and earn the nickname, Rock of Chickamauga). The South's victory was reduced to a tactical one and the Confederates would never again be in a strategic position to threaten Tennessee.

The simulation begins at 0800 on 19 September 1863. With 13 game turns, the South must either break the Union forces or seize critical terrain to the north (representing Union supply lines and the road to Chattanooga). However, mere occupancy is insufficient, since the player must have 3-5,000 troops in the area without any enemy troops adjacent to gain victory points for terrain. In effect, a flying column will not achieve victory. One must fight and seize the terrain. In Gettysburg, small Union cavalry columns could seize key terrain deep in the Confederate rear, but this defect has been corrected in *Chickamauga*.

Tactical Suggestions

Woods squares are the most important terrain considerations in *Chickamauga*. Most of the battlefield is densely forested and fields of fire are very limited. The following recommendations are based upon this reviewer's play of the Confederate position:

(1) Make The Right Wing Strong So important that it serves as the sub-title of this review, the right wing is the goal of the South. The quotation, apocryphally Field Marshal Graf von Schlieffen's dying words, referred to the German battle plan in 1914. However, it is true in *Chickamauga* as well. With three objective squares worth 5,000 victory points each, the northern map edge serves as the locus of victory. The problem is that most of the Army is in the center-south. Therefore, for the greater part of the first day, a massive shift should be made north. The right wing should be magnified until it is the *schwerpunkt* of the army.

(2) Avoid melee combat at all cost Melee combat involves actual hand-to-hand confrontation. Based upon repeated plays, this reviewer recommends avoidance of melee combat. Even when successful, the attacking player is likely to incur just as many if not more casualties than the defender. Even more important, the drive to surround and annihilate an opposing formation can be attractive; yet, short-term gains are often defeated by the positional facing that melee combat demands. Since units may retreat after fire but before melee, even well-planned melee assaults often develop into worthless but vulnerable salients. Granted there are opportunities that make melee combat seem beneficial,

however, this reviewer feels that in the wooded terrain of *Chickamauga*, fire combat should best be utilized as the key to victory.

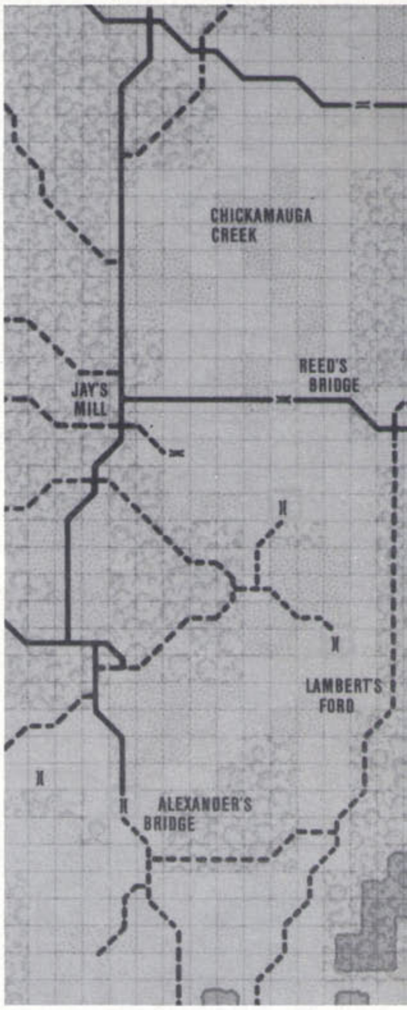
(3) Command Control Note that the Confederate position is of sufficient difficulty that the default position is pro-Southern (2 on a 1-5 scale). This reviewer utilized historical difficulty and found that the simulation is indeed difficult. Nothing is more demoralizing than to employ proper tactics and lose because of misplaced commanders who become casualties. After moving all units, one should step through the entire army structure again, paying particular attention to corps commanders. While an entire division may be in the battle line, it is doubtful that an entire corps will be placed totally in the line. Therefore, insure that the corps commanders are not in the area of risk. If possible, similar placement of divisional commanders should be made.

(4) Reconnaissance As the Confederate, one must advance through heavily-forested terrain. It is wise to utilize a unit that is not expected to be in the forefront of the battle for such purposes. Use such a unit to probe ahead. When enemy units are found, negate the unit's move. This will use four operation points, but since that unit was not going to be in the battleline anyway, the loss is more than offset by the intelligence gain.

(5) Fatigue Moving through unimproved terrain exacts a toll. It is better to rest units for a turn when their fatigue exceeds forty than it is to force them into combat wherein their fatigue can substantially abet their defeat.

(6) Morale When morale is lower than twenty, the next attack will most likely rout the unit. Therefore, pull all units with morale less than thirty out of the line in order to rest them and prevent disproportional losses.

In terms of historical accuracy, *Chickamauga* does indeed pose an accurate simulation as of 19 September 1863. Then again, this also is the product's largest flaw. The first day of battle was a confused series of small-unit engagements, with each side pouring in units as contact was made. However, the historical impact of the battle was Thomas' defense after the Union line was smashed. The computer is too smart to permit a similar debacle, and this reviewer hopes that the player is of, at least, equivalent intelligence. Thus, one cannot attempt to simulate either Thomas' superb defense or alternatively, Longstreet's chance to decisively destroy the Union Army of the Cumberland. The designer, Chuck Kroegel, did consider an additional scenario; however, he felt that the breakthrough would not be an interesting scenario. This reviewer also queried as to the dates of the scenario. Too often, the simulation plays like the *Guns of August* - one races for the sea (i.e. north) in an attempt to outflank the enemy. Then, if success is not achieved, one digs in a la trench warfare. The weeks preceding the Battle of Chickamauga portray a campaign of maneuver. Similar in concept to the Napoleonic Ulm Campaign, General Rosecrans had seized much key terrain without battle. Only when his corps diverged sufficiently to become targets in detail did the chance of battle become real. This war of movement was more strategic in nature than the detail of *Chickamauga*. Thus, one can sympathize with the designer's dilemma. However, this reviewer wishes that the additional scenario had been offered. It may not have been a fascinating battle, but it would have permitted the user to appreciate what General George H. Thomas accomplished at Chickamauga that fateful day.



Grand Tactics and Strategy

Strategically, the South may choose the time and place of the assault. The Confederate had the burden of attack historically, since this was the South's last opportunity to mass sufficient troops to seize the offensive. In examining the terrain map, it is obvious that the Union has the advantage of interior lines. The only improved north-south road axis is securely in Union hands and permits the North rapid access to any threatened area. Thus, the South must mislead the North by feint attacks or noncommital of units so that there is doubt as to where the main assault will fall.

Based upon discussions with the design staff at **SSI**, strategic options are to assault in the middle or the northern front ("Make the Right Wing Strong"). The middle option permits a heavy assault in the first day since the Army of Tennessee can mass against its Union adversaries. The problem is that the Union can achieve rapid reinforcement and fall back. This strategic option will cause massive casualties for both sides and is so very reminiscent of an assault at Flanders Field.

The northern offensive saves lives and offers a better chance for victory in this reviewer's opinion. A coherent battle line is unnecessary. The computer Union is complacent enough to stand in place for most of the battle. Only in the latter hours of the second day does the Union probe eastwards. Demi-brigades stationed at terrain "choke points" should be sufficient to delay the Northern thrust. It should be noted that the Northern Offensive can convert the game into a battle of maneuver for the entire first day. It is optimal to relieve units at the center-south and simply push the rest of the Army northwards in its quest. Open areas

Continued on page 35

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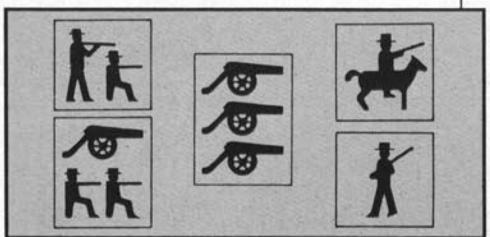
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should be avoided as these yield maximum targets to the alert Northerners.

When all is ready for the assault, *beware of artillery*. The North has some idea of where the attack will be developing. Therefore, his artillery may be ready. Assaults in the face of emplaced artillery are usually defeated, and even if successful, they are hazardous to one's health.



The best assault against artillery is via flanking movements. Similarly, the South should not squander cavalry units. Since these are worth twice as much as infantry in terms of victory points, they should only be utilized for seizure of rear objectives and not for use in the battle line. Too vulnerable to hold their own, these units are simply too expensive to risk!

The **SSI** design staff notes that the attacker is favored. Lest one get the wrong idea, this is true, but with the following caveat. If the South commits himself to the attack, his initial advantage may well be superseded by Northern counterattacks in later turns which are easier to reinforce. Thus, the advantage of the attacker is only true if care is taken to allow a second echelon - the follow-on forces which can relieve a spent division and press the assault.

Conclusions

User-friendly, *Chickamauga* is an accurate rendition of the Battle of Chickamauga as it began. This reviewer would have preferred the additional scenario ("The Rock of Chickamauga"), but one can sympathize with the designer.

Playings of the battle often leave one with a World War I mentality, and one wonders if the terrain were adjusted and the game entitled "Race for the Sea -- 1914" if anything else would change. Yet, this reviewer must admit that his initial feeling of complacency was shattered by the grand tactical difficulty of the situation.

Chickamauga is not an easy system to beat. Repeated playings by this reviewer have led to, at best, a Confederate minor victory and it is doubtful if a breakthrough can be achieved. The armies are too evenly matched. The computer's play may lack the brilliance of a Thomas or a Forrest, but its consistency can well doom the human opponent who makes a tactical error.

While this battle does not match the historical significance or interest of *Gettysburg*, the strategic considerations herein offer this product as an interesting conundrum to the serious wargamer.

[For additional reading, Shelby Foote's *Civil War: A Narrative* (now in paperback!) is recommended, as is Esposito's *West Point Atlas of American Wars*]

The Best Educational Games: 1987

By Bob Proctor

On March 25, 1987, Carlos J. Moorhead, Congressman from California, introduced a resolution in the U. S. Congress to designate October, 1987 as "National Computer Learning Month." The percentage of U. S. schools using computers in the classroom has grown from 18% to 96% since 1981. As part of CGW's participation in "National Computer Learning Month," we offer the following annotated bibliography by our educational game consultant.

With all of the educational programs on the market today, it's tough to know which are the good ones. We've tried to make your decision easier by selecting the best games in a variety of categories. You still have to pick the one that best fits your particular needs but ALL of the games listed below are well done. Apologies in advance to the good games that were left off due to ignorance.

The prices shown are "suggested retail prices" but most of these games are available for less. Many of the "classics" are now sold for $10 to $15 which makes them excellent values! The codes for the different types of computers are: Amg= Amiga, App= Apple II family (App 128 means 128K required), AGS= Apple IIGS, Atari= 8-bit Atari family, AST= Atari ST, C64= Commodore 64, IBM= IBM PC and PC Jr. (IBM 256 means 256K required), Mac= Macintosh (Mac 512 means 512K required)

Preschool

Comparison Kitchen
DLM Software, $33 (App, IBM), 4-6

A different subject matter makes this game stand out. It teaches you to discriminate by color, shape, and by concepts like "less and more" or "big and little", using cooking and food themes. Colorful and entertaining.

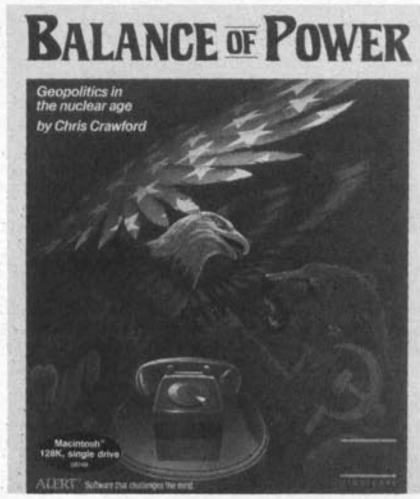
Donald Duck's Playground
Sierra On-line, $30 (Amg, App, AST, C64, IBM), 5-8

Several games within a game teach recognition of colors, shapes, and letters, a little logic, and a little about handling money. This game is colorful and a lot of fun, but requires good coordination.

Kidstime
Great Wave., $50 (Mac), 3-8

This program offers a variety of activities including connect-the-dots, letter recognition, making up silly stories and listening to the computer repeat them and composing music. The best title in this category for Mac owners.







Kindercomp
Spinnaker, $25 (App, Atari, C64, IBM), 3-6

Six games in one provide the usual subjects: letter recognition, counting, simple addition, basic keyboard skills. Excellent graphics.

Stickybear A-B-C and Stickybear Numbers
Weekly Reader Software, $40 (App) $30 (C64), 3-6

Letter and number recognition with very cute graphics and good sound. These are the beginning programs in a series that covers shapes, arithmetic, reading, spelling and typing. They are all first-class products but other games include several of the subjects for the same price.

Stickybear Opposites
Weekly Reader Software, $35 (App, C64), 5-7

Perhaps the best of the series is this game that portrays concepts like high and low, bright and dark, fast and slow, and off and on with colorful and entertaining graphics.

Language Skills

Jungle Book Reading
Fisher-Price/Spinnaker, $40 (App, C64), 7-12

Uses the famous Kipling stories as a means to practice reading and comprehension. You must help Mowgli (the Boy) collect the clues to find Bagheera (the Panther). Excellent graphics and some speech synthesis.

Kidtalk
First Byte, $50 (Amg, AGS, AST, C64, (Mac), 5-9

At last a program that can pronounce spelling words! The quality of the sound varies among the machines but all are good enough to be an improvement over scrambling the letters. Now you really have to remember how to spell!

Magic Spells
The Learning Co., $35 (App,C64,IBM), 6-12

This is a competent spelling game where words can be either scrambled or flashed. It has 35 word lists and it is easy to add your own.

Mystery!
Woodbury Software, $25 (App, C64, IBM), 9-13

This is a good and reasonably-priced program that dares to be different. A partially complete mystery story encourages older children to add plot and characters to create their own individual story.

Sea Speller
Fisher-Price/Spinnaker, $25 (App, C64, IBM), 5-9

Here's a game for beginning spellers that blends practice into a beat-the-deadline adventure. Graphics and sound are great.

Writer Rabbit
The Learning Co., $40 (App,IBM) 7-10

A game with many options for many age levels. The silly sentences generated by mixing random phrases will keep everybody laughing

while they learn about grammar and the parts of speech.

Math

Geometry
Broderbund, $100 (Mac), 15+

An open-ended program for students who are willing to explore on their own. This program makes excellent use of Mac graphics to illustrate concepts. The problems, which are optional, are mostly proofs and are tough but provide excellent on-screen help when you make a mistake.

Alge-Blaster and Math-Blaster
Davidson & Assoc., $50 (App,IBM), 12-16

These new games are the standard of comparison for practicing math. Math-Blaster includes add, subtract, multiply, divide and fractions. Both have several formats, allow good control over the problems, come with a wide variety of problems, and allow you to enter your own.

Stickybear Math
Weekly Reader Software, $40 (App) $30 (C64), 5-8

Stickybear goes on an adventure and you have to help him with correct answers to addition and subtraction problems. As with all of this series, the graphics are very cute and the sound is good.

Success with Math
Mindscape, $30 (App, IBM), 6-15

Mindscape now owns the marketing rights to this series of programs from CBS. No fancy graphics or sound here, just competent drill and practice programs that let you control the number, size, and type of problems being practiced. The series starts with simple addition and includes multiplication, division, fractions and linear equations.

Science

Chem Lab
Simon & Schuster, $40 (App, Atari, C64, IBM), 12+

This program is an open-end chemical laboratory that won't blow up your house (or your computer). The lengthy manual provides problems and answers, but encourages exploration.

Rocky's Boots
The Learning Co., $35 (C64), $50 (App, IBM 256), 1

This is a classic that still impresses after several years on the market. In this program, you can build "logic machines" to select certain objects out of a group. It starts simple, but gets very challenging!

The Halley Project
Mindscape, $40 (Amg, App, Atari, C64), 10+

Learn about the Solar System while completing 10 missions in this game. You plot your "course" by eye against a backdrop of stars, so you learn the major constellations as well as data about the planets and moons.

The Observatory
Lightspeed., $50 (App), 12+

Have a planetarium on your desk! The excellent manual has several examples and suggestions, but basically lets you form the questions and explore the skies on your own. The accuracy and speed are outstanding.

The Royal Rules
Sunburst, $59 (App), 10+

How are you at deduction? This ingenious game lets you conduct "experiments" to try to determine the common characteristic in a group of objects. After you've tried theirs, make up your own rules and stump your friends.

Think Quick
The Learning Co., $40 (App,IBM), 7-14

Here is a marvelous new game that combines a room-to-room sense of adventure with simple logic puzzles. It has two "castles" to explore, plus a design-your-own feature.

Geography

Balance of Power
Mindscape, $50 (Amg, App 128, AST, IBM 256, Mac), 15+

This game won't teach you the names of mountains and rivers, but socio-economic facts -- GNP, literacy, consumer spending, political stability -- are cleverly displayed on global maps. You'll need this background to hold your own in the world of superpower politics. Don't start World War III or you'll lose!

Crosscountry USA
Didatech Software, $40 (App), 10+

This game assumes that the best way to learn about the USA is to drive through it. You are a truck driver and have to pick up and deliver various products. The screen shows the dashboard and the view out the windshield; watch the scenery change in different parts of the country! Not only do you learn about topography, population and the economy, you must practice safe driving habits, eat and sleep well, and keep an eye on the weather.

States and Traits
Designware, $45 (App), 9-14

This is the best for learning "just the facts". Goes beyond state names and capitals to include historic sites, mountains, rivers and other landforms. A companion title, European Nations and Locations, covers Europe in the same format.

Where in the World is Carmen Sandiego?
Broderbund, $40 (App, C64, IBM), 10+

This is a fun and easy to play mystery game that zips you from one world capital to another, following a trail of clues in the form of place names and facts. The answers are all in the World Almanac (included) so you learn to use this reference as well. The newer companion game, Where in the USA is C.S.?, is similar but keeps the chase inside US borders.

Other Subjects

The Body Transparent
Designware, $45 (App), 10+

This contains a basic anatomy course. If you think your humerus is your Funny Bone, you'd better get this program quick.

Cartels & Cutthroats
Strategic Simulations Inc., $40 (App, C64, IBM), 12+

This is one of the oldest games on this list and aspiring MBA's might prefer the more complex Venture Business Simulation, but Cartels is still best for Jr. High and High school level. You can play against others or against the computer.

Chipwits
Brainpower, $50 (C64, IBM, Mac), 10+

This one is a fun and ingenious way to teach the concepts of computer programming. Program a robot by building a flowchart. Score points by collecting certain objects and avoiding others. Compare your creations against the prefab models in 8 different mazes.

Deluxe Music Construction Set
Electronic Arts, $50-100 (Amg, AGS, Mac 512), 12+

While not a tutorial, this program provides a great environment for exploring the relationship between music and its notation. The Deluxe version of this classic is capable of professional quality sheet music.

Millionaire
Blue Chip (now Britannica Learning), $30 (C64) $50 (App, IBM), 14+

Want to know about investing in the stack and bond markets? This is the most complete and realistic simulation there is, except for their new The American Investor. If you have never invested or don't understand the stock market, you will want to start with this one.

The Notable Phantom
Designware, $50 (App, C64, IBM), 5-8

For younger folks who need more color and entertainment in a music program, here's a good one. Several structured games teach note recognition and names. Includes a plastic keyboard overlay to imitate piano keys.

The Oregon Trail
MECC, $20 (App), 10+

Updated in 1985, this version of the old classic is so improved that its heritage is unrecognizable. Excellent graphics, period music, tidbits

of historical lore; find out just how HARD it was to get to Oregon in 1848.

President Elect
Strategic Simulations Inc., $40 (App, C64), 12+

Newly re-issued with all the potential candidates for 1988, this is just the ticket to make the upcoming primary battles more meaningful.

Wilderness
Electric Transit, $50 (App), 12+

The good news is you survived the plane crash in one piece. The bad news is you're going to have to walk to civilization. The basic game teaches map-reading and orienteering skills. Other variants, with help from the lengthy manual, teach survival and camping techniques.

Educational Software Publishers

Want to learn more about these and other educational games? Here is a list of the publishers of the above programs.

Broderbund Software
17 Paul Drive; San Rafael, CA 94903
(415) 479-1170

Brainpower
24009 Ventura Blvd.; Calabasas, CA 91302
(818) 884-6911

Davidson & Assoc.
3135 Kashiwa St.; Torrance, CA 90505
(800) 556-6141

Designware
185 Berry St.; San Francisco, CA 94107
(415) 546-1866

Didatech Software
943 Boblett; Blaine, WA 98230
(604) 299-4435

DLM Software
1One DLM Park; Allen, TX 75002
(214) 248-6300

Electric Transit
501 Marin St. #116; Thousand Oaks, CA 91360
(805) 373-1960

Electronic Arts
1820 Gateway Dr; San Mateo, CA 94404
(415) 571-7171

First Byte, Inc.
2845 Temple Ave.; Long Beach, CA 90806
(213) 595-7006

Fisher-Price
One Kendall Square; Cambridge, MA 02238
(617) 494-1200

Great Wave Software
PO Box 5847; Stanford, CA 94305

The Learning Co.
4370 Alpine Rd.; Portola Valley, CA 94025
(415) 328-5410

Lightspeed
2124 Kittredge St. #185; Berkeley, CA 94704
(415) 486-1165

MECC
3490 Lexington Ave. North; St. Paul, MN 55126
(612) 481-3660

Mindscape
3444 Dundee Road; Northbrook, IL 60062
(312) 480-7667

Scholastic Software
730 Broadway; New York, NY 10003
(212) 505-3501

Sierra On-line, Inc.
Coarsegold, CA 93614
(209) 683-6858

Simon & Schuster, Inc.
One Gulf+Western Plaza; New York, NY 10023
(212) 333-5800

Spinnaker
One Kendall Square; Cambridge, MA 02238
(617) 494-1200

Springboard Software
7808 Creekridge Circle; Minneapolis, MN 55435
(612) 944-3915

Strategic Simulations Inc.
1046 N. Rengstorff Ave.; Mountain View, CA 94043
(800) 443-0100

Sunburst Communications
39 Washington Ave; Pleasantville, NY 10570
(914) 796-5030

Weekly Reader Family Software
245 Long Hill Rd.; Middletown, CT 06457
(203) 638-2400

Woodbury Software
127 White Oak Lane; Old Bridge, NJ 08857
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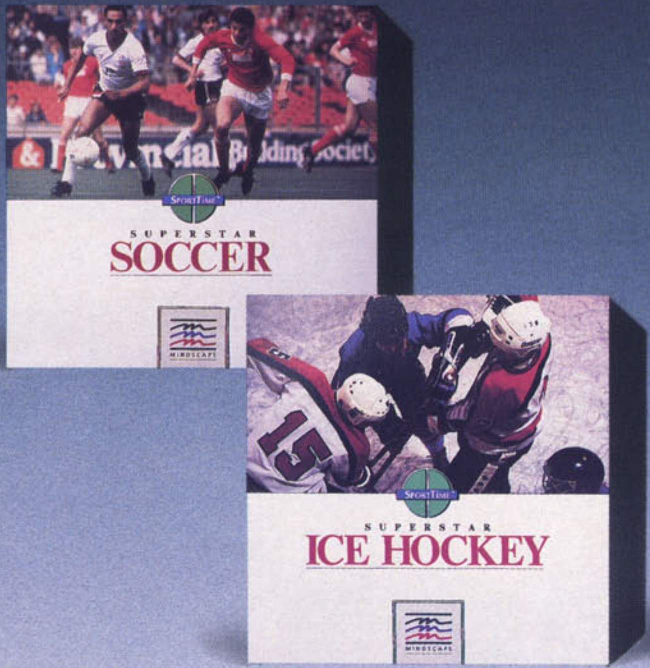
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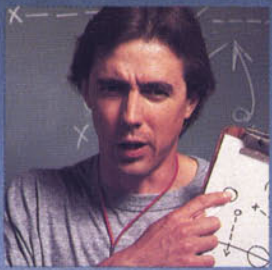


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THE NAME GAME

By Johnny Wilson

When Tom Frisina called to tell us he was leaving Accolade to form his own new company, **Three-Sixty**, we wondered what the significance of the name was. Did it represent a complete turn-around in corporate approach from what he had attempted elsewhere? Did it mean that the new company would attempt to encircle the entire range of possible software applications? Was it a reference to the landmark IBM mainframe system 360s? So, we called him back and this is what he said. He wanted the company to make people think. It turns out that this venture reflected his desire to "...start a new publishing company, with a fresh and more diverse approach to the business." Hence, the name Three Sixty represents a full circle. The name suggests that Tom has gone full circle from producing software products for other people to producing software which satisfies him. It also indicates the new company's desire to provide the full range of applications for the home computer market, including some areas hitherto untapped. This got us to thinking about what some of the other company names meant. Here's the result!

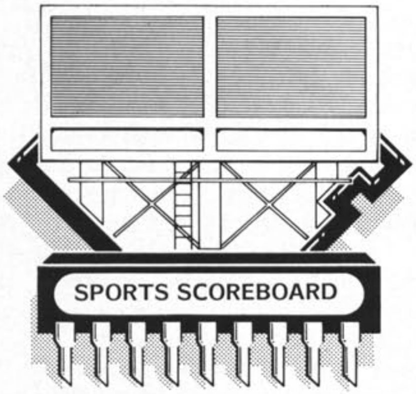
Since **Microprose** has agreed to change their name in the next two years, we wondered where the company name originated. One primitive idea was to call the company "Smuggers Software". The name reflected the original user group of which Sid Meier was a member (ie. Sid Meier Users Group Software). They decided that was too esoteric, so they came up with Microprose. Microprose was intended to suggest "Prose for the computer". Additionally, by dropping the "e" the name would also suggest 'Micro-professionals'. During the first year of Microprose's existence, they began to receive informal telephone inquiries and protests from Micropro, publishers of Wordstar. Since Micropro itself was so new, the founders of Microprose were unaware of its existence, so they did not realize the potential problem recently settled out of court (see *Computer Game Forum* #1, p. 5).

Then, we got to thinking about **Brøderbund**. We thought the name simply referred to a group of brothers. Gary Carlston told us that when they were forming the company, the three brothers wanted a name that was cute, fun and unique. Doug had completed a space adventure game on the TRS-80 called, "Galactic Saga" where many of the locations had African names (Afrikaan, Swahili, etc.). Indeed, there was a group of merchants in the game who were known as the Broederbond. Unfortunately, the use of the Afrikaan spelling would have implied a support for the South African regime which was far from the brothers' actual position. In fact, Gary was ousted from South Africa because he dared to teach at an integrated school in Botswana. Linguistically, the name is built off the German "bruderbundt" and/or Afrikaans "broederbond" (perhaps, a Dutch cognate, as well) and means, literally, "Association of Brothers." The name was chosen to emphasize the family aspect of the business and it accomplishes this task. In addition, the company used the "ø" to create both a pseudo-Scandinavian aura and "pun" on the as it appears on the computer screen. When this pseudo-Scandinavian mystique is coupled with the triple crown symbol of the Brøderbund logo (since the three crowns are Swedish national symbols), the name has often been erroneously reported as meaning "Brotherhood" in Swedish. Since Gary used to teach Swedish and this meaning is incorrect, this misinformation, still published, is most unfortunate.

Then there is the case of **Sierra**. We found out that in 1977, *On-line Systems* began as a mainframe communications company creating interfaces and patches for mainframes. In 1980, they started doing software for the micros and brought over the old name. In 1982, a bigger company in Pennsylvania threatened to sue them over the use of the name, so they changed the name to Sierra On-line (since they were located in the Sierra-Nevada Mountains) and that has been shortened to the more colorful Sierra.

Of course, one of the oldest names in

Continued on page 57



SPORTS SCOREBOARD

Street Sports Baseball and California Games

By Rick Teverbaugh

Although not to be considered serious sports simulations, here is a pair of very fun and quite challenging sports games from Epyx: *Street Sports Baseball* (the first of a Street Sports series that will also include basketball and football) and *California Games*.

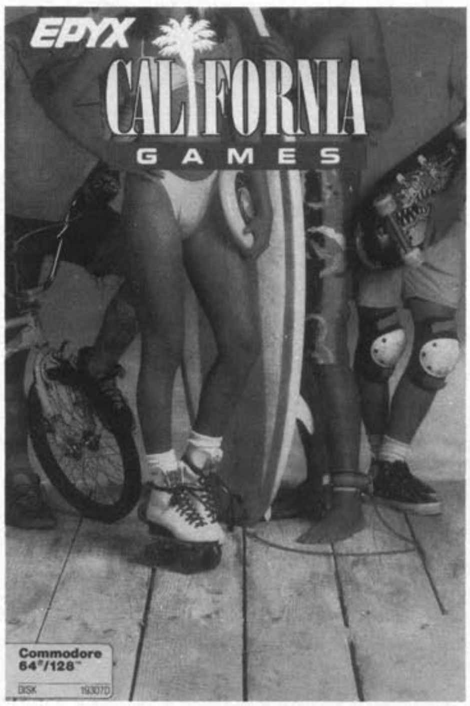
Wish They All Could Be California Games!

Let's stop in California first because this entry is both similar to and nothing at all like the Summer Games, Winter Games and World Games programs that are, probably, already on your sports shelf. Those games recreated actual Olympic-style events and all were faithful to the actual competition mode. All used joystick control and were exercises in good judgment, reflexes, timing and, in some cases, endurance. All of those factors still come into play in California Games.

The earlier offerings featured stunning graphics with occasional whimsical features and workable sound effects. Ditto with California Games. With the previous games, it was possible to compete in some or all of the events, practice in one or more events and set records for top scores or times. The same holds true with California Games.

So where are the differences?

California Games makes competition out of recreational activities that are not limited to California, but certainly more in tune with that particular lifestyle. A listing of the events should confirm that statement. For California Games, we get half pipe skateboarding instead of skating; we have the foot bag in place of the log throw; there is



surfing in place of skiing; and there is flying disk (what a careful way to avoid saying "frisbee") instead of discus. Roller skating and BMX racing round out the events.

All of these events take place in the natural habitat instead of some huge arena, but the backdrop further enhances the entire mood of the competition. Should you doubt that there can be exciting head-to-head fervor in such a laid-back atmosphere, just boot up the game and go at it with family members or friends.

California Games isn't perfect. The order of the events wasn't thought out too well. I found the most difficult event in the entire competition was skateboarding and where is this competition in the grand scheme of things? You guessed it. First.

The joystick will get quite a workout in skateboarding. There is an up and down motion needed to establish momentum within the pipe. Then the joystick must be tapped in the right direction at the right time to perform a stunt for points. One false move and you fall, ending the competition.

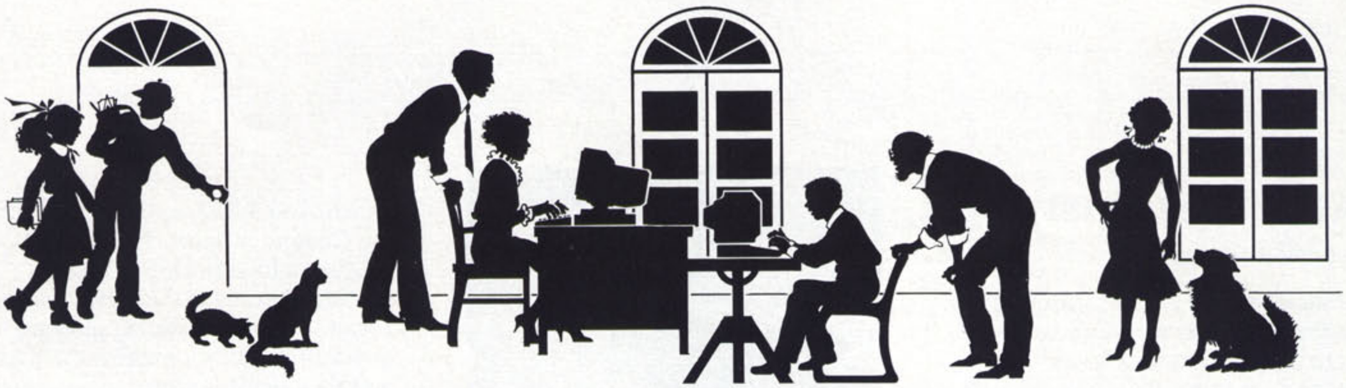
My two favorites are next up, foot bag and surfing. It's impossible to do anything wrong in footbag that will end your turn. Moving left and right by pushing the joystick in that direction will set up the various kicks that earn points. Moving the joystick up causes a jump and pulling the stick down causes an about face. The joystick button can be used to butt the bag into the air with your head. Surfing is nearly worth the cost of the program alone. You can ride the board for 1.5 minutes or until you wipe out four times. Do well and a friendly dolphin will swim past in a tail fin salute, but do poorly and a shark will come by (with appropriate music) to feast upon your remains. Steer the surfer left or right by moving the stick in that direction. for this event the phrase "no guts, no glory' really applies. You won't get the top scores by riding straight near the top of the wave. You needed to ride the crest, make the big turns, challenge the tube of the wave to earn the highest marks.

Roller skating will also give the joystick a workout. It is necessary to roll the stick around to simulate the thrust with the left foot and the right. This isn't a speed contest. You earn points by avoiding obstacles and remaining on your wheels. Once you can do it with some spins, you'll really be ready for some Hall of Fame material.

BMX Racing combines timing with a good memory to achieve the best results. Unlike roller skating, BMX judges both speed and style for a final point total. You're allowed one bad fall or three minor ones before being knocked out of the race. To make sure you score points, after a couple of minor tumbles, try just to complete the rest of the course without incident, especially if another competitor has already failed to finish his run.

Flying disk probably simulates the real sport as good as anything in the

Continued on page 44



Fun For The Entire Family

SOLITAIRE ROYALE



Available on IBM 256K (EGA, CGA, Tandy). Macintosh and Amiga coming soon.

Solitare doesn't necessarily mean you play alone. Eight kinds of solitaire are presented in a unique and entertaining format to be played individually or competitively. Choose from 10 beautiful card decks. For the children, three additional games are included. It's a "must see" product and one you'll play for years!



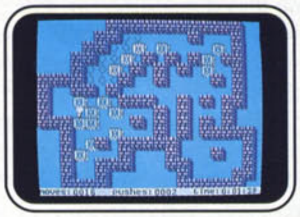
IBM EGA version

SOKO-BAN



Available on Commodore 64K, IBM 256K, and Apple // 128K.

This maze strategy game will capture your interest the first time you play. Your challenge is to solve 50 levels of increasingly difficult mazes, then create an infinite number of mazes yourself with the option to save 49 of them at a time. Number of moves and pushes plus time elapsed are important factors in scoring. Improve upon your scores each time you play.



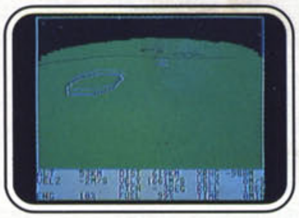
IBM version

LUNAR EXPLORER



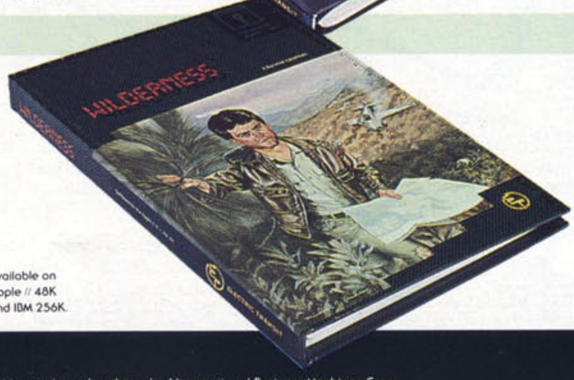
Available on Apple // 48K and IBM 128K.

You are in control of a lunar landing vehicle. While exploring the moon and investigating all its rills and craters, take time to marvel at "out the window" views of constellations, the Earth rising over the lunar horizon and the Apollo 11 landing site. Eight exercises are available to learn piloting maneuvers. Scores meassure accuracy of navigation and efficiency of fuel consumption.



Apple // version

WILDERNESS



Available on Apple // 48K and IBM 256K.

Spice up your life with adventure; your plane has crashed in a desolate area high in the Sierra Nevadas. Relying on your wits, a few supplies, and any natural resources available, attempt to find your way to the ranger station. The comprehensive survival guide included could save your life in this computer adventure and could provide useful tips for your real-life adventures!



Apple // version

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Spectrum HoloByte™

2061 Challenger Drive, Alameda, CA 94501 (415) 522-3584

Sports Scoreboard

(Continued from page 42)

program. Two taps of the joystick sends the disk on its way. Control then shifts to the person who's supposed to catch the darn thing. Points are earned for accuracy and height of the toss and for style points upon making the catch.

California Games isn't for the die-hard sports fan who even thinks that Australian Rules Football should be taken seriously. But for those who've always maintained that the word fun should always be a part of any competition, give it a try.

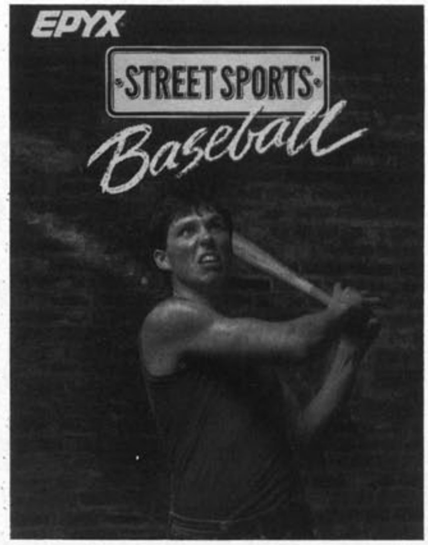
Asphalt Diamond on the Spikes of Their Shoes

Street Sports Baseball is more reminiscent than whimsical, but it is no less fun. Remember the sandlot games where home plate was a garbage can lid and old tree stumps were just part of the hazards of outfield duty? Well, all that and more comes alive in this excellent program.

There are 16 players of the 52nd Street gang ready to play a game. Two players can divide them up individually or you can do the same against a computer. For a series of games, the sides can be saved to disk and called up again later. Or the computer can choose them at random. Far from being a male chauvinist outing, six of the players are girls and a couple of them will be among your first choices. Almost every kid has strengths and weaknesses. A good read through their abilities in the manual is essential to creating a team that will perform to your style of managing.

The screen display is divided neatly into three parts. The top contains the scoreboard with team names, score, player at bat, inning and the count. The left side shows a close-up of the action, while the right side gives an overview of the entire field.

One unique aspect of the game is the control of the ball once it leaves the pitcher's hand. It is possible to change speed and direction on its way to the plate. The batter must always be alert and the pitcher must always be careful.



It is possible to hit a batter and give up an extra base. A status line below the screen will tell whether the ball is hit on the ground or in the air to help position the fielders defensively.

Both California Games and Street Sports Baseball were reviewed in Commodore configurations. Both will certainly be released for other machines. Epyx has actively supported the Atari ST, IBM and Apple machines and I would expect that to be the case with these games also. I would also anticipate Street Sports Basketball and Football to be ready before year's end.

Waving The Caution Flag!

Sad to say, there's some negative news for sports gamers too. I had expected to cover the Computer Sports Network this time around also. One of the first gaming features of the service was to revolve around Mean 18, allowing gamers to play that excellent golf game and then register scores to compete for prizes. Some bugs have developed in the system and at deadline phone calls went unanswered as to the extent of the trouble or timetable for solutions. Stay tuned here for further developments.

I had also planned coverage for Share Data's Golf programs. Released as a Apple/C-64 flippy. My version never booted on the Commodore side and the Apple version hung up twice at hole No.6 and then hole No.7 when the random drawing element put a lake over the same spot as the green. It is a low cost program, but right now a very low value one as well.

See ya' next time and be a good sport.

SAVING THE HUMAN RACE CAN BE VERY ENTERTAINING.

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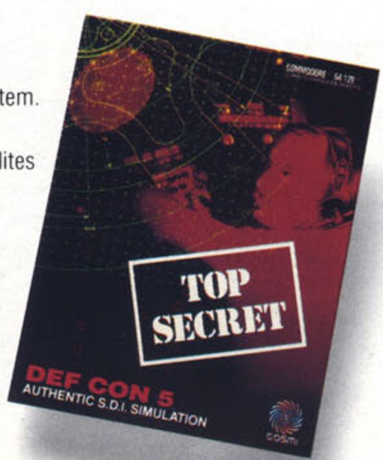
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The Eternal Dagger

by Scorpia

NAME:	The Eternal Dagger
SYSTEMS:	Apple, Atari, C-64/128
PRICE:	$39.95
DESIGNER:	Paul Murray
PUBLISHER:	Strategic Simulations, Inc. Mountain View, CA

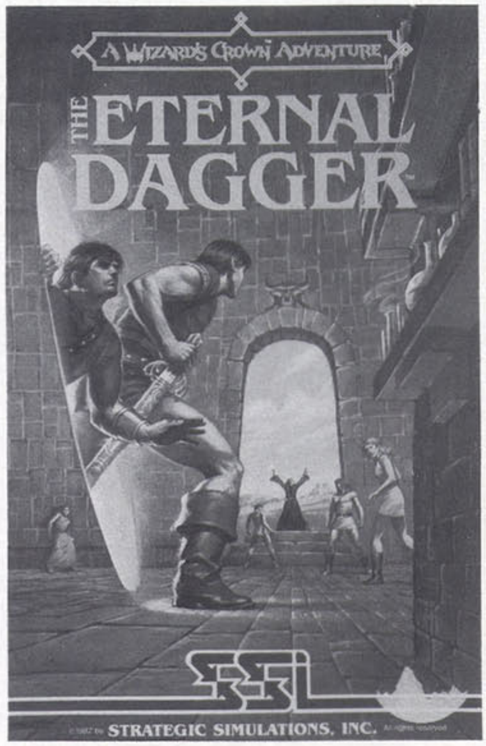
Twilight of the Tale

Consider Middle World: a land overrun by demons, undead, and a host of other inimical creatures; a beach head for further invasions of yet, other worlds by these evil beings; a place where the remaining inhabitants fight a desperate and losing battle against time; and a locale where only the strongest, most powerful, and courageous of adventurers have any hope of turning the tide, travelling across the islands and down into a sunken city, where they could close the portal between the Middle World and the demon world forever . . . from the demon side.

Once more the call for help goes out, and (not surprisingly) is duly answered. Since this is the follow-up to Wizard's Crown, you can transfer your entire party from that game. They will come without any of their magical weapons or armor, but their stats (ability scores, skills, etc) will be unchanged.

Fortunately, they will be given ordinary weapons and armor to start with, so you won't need to worry about sending your group out without protection or offensive capabilities.

The same is true if you prefer to create an entirely new party or use the one that comes pre-created with the game. In all cases, you begin with only non-magical items; anything better will have to be looted from defeated opponents or purchased when you can find a place to buy them (which won't be for some time).



The Island of Dr. "Necro"

After you've arrived on the island, your first task is to locate and eliminate the Necromancer who has turned the island's inhabitants into undead monsters. This means you will be running into roaming groups of undead farmers, along with the usual undead warriors, skeletons, zombies, spirits, ghosts, etc. Having a couple of priests in your party definitely comes in handy here.

There is also a dragon on the island that you must fight and defeat in order to obtain a magical weapon that will help in your confrontation with the Necromancer. A group of rebels (when you find them) will provide you with a magical dragon-slaying sword that can aid in defeating the dragon. Hang on to that sword, as it will be useful later on.

Once you've defeated the Necromancer (which will also undo his spells), your party will be able to travel to the Elven and Dwarven isles, so you can find the Eternal Dagger and have it enchanted. Only the Dagger can close the portal between this world and the demon world....and you'll have to do that from within the demon world itself.

Long Play's Journey Into Light

Along the way there will be towns to visit, dungeons to explore, and beings to talk to (sometimes). Information can occasionally be picked up in a tavern, and there is a great deal to be learned from a small booklet of hints and tips that comes with the game (make sure you read that!).

The game mechanics are pretty much the same as they were in Wizard's Crown, although some changes have been made. Five spells (Magic Bolt, Wound, Poison, Darkness, Shatter) have been dropped, and replaced with new ones: Freeze, Disengage, Fear, Fumble, and Magic Blast.

Also, the combat maneuvers of Fall Prone and Stand Erect are gone, while Throw Weapon and Quickcast a Spell have been added. In the dungeons, Alter Active Status of Characters and Wait have been eliminated, and Change Active Character has been put in.

Otherwise, everything is the same as in the previous game. However, these changes also mean a change in some of the letter commands, so make sure you check out at least the command summary before starting to play, even if you're familiar with Wizard's Crown.

One of the biggest (and most welcome) changes in the game is in the area of dungeon movement. Previously, the whole party moved as individual characters, which was not only time-consuming, but often frustrating, as party members invariably became stuck behind walls. It took a fair amount of maneuvering and changing back and forth of active characters to get the party together again.

Now, however, only one character is active, and that character is the only one who shows up in the dungeon screens. The rest of the group is there, you just don't see them (and they don't get stuck). This makes travel through dungeons much faster and also easier on the ulcers. Changing active characters simply replaces one icon with another, so no additional movement is necessary.

On the other hand, dungeon combat

has taken something of a nosedive. It is harder now, due to the placement of the party when fighting begins. Consider a typical situation: your party walks down a narrow corridor and comes to a door. Opening it reveals monsters on the other side and combat ensues.

Before battle actually starts, you have the option of changing the positions of your party members. Unfortunately, when everyone is standing there in a straight line outside the door, there isn't very much you can do about it (especially if you happen to be the poor guy up front, who usually can't be moved at all).

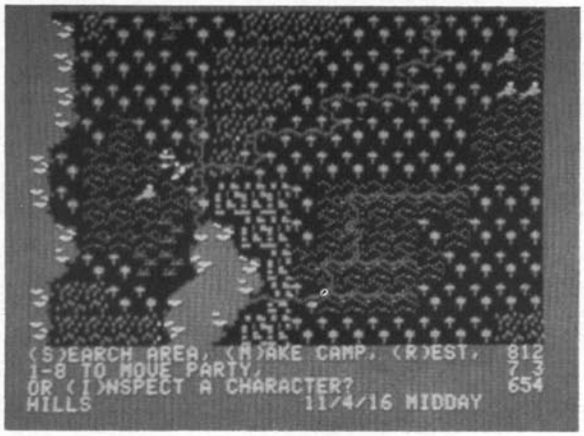
Therefore, your first priority will usually be to start moving your people into the room as soon as you can. This may not always be possible, as when a monster or two are right beside the doorway and your whole party is stuck until some room frees up.

Distance weapons can sometimes help in these situations, but much depends on the placement of the door relative to the party. Too often, the angles are too severe, and bows or thrown weapons can't be used, making for a great deal of frustration during dungeon combat and lengthening the time you have to fight, since a lot of it is used just to maneuver your members to where they can get in a blow.

Another problem is that monsters in Eternal Dagger are much tougher than they were in Wizard's Crown. Tactical combat is necessary for all but the wimpiest creatures, and there aren't too many of those around. When in doubt, use tactical combat. While time-consuming, you will usually do better with it.

As an example, one time I used quick combat against some giant spiders, which are relatively low-grade monsters. Six out of eight party members took damage, and three were poisoned, before the spiders were defeated. When I used tactical combat, only one person ended up poisoned, and only a couple had taken some injury, and that was minor. The computer is definitely NOT on your side in quick combats.

Magic is much more heavily used and needed than before. There are some instances, in fact, where only magic will really be able to defeat the creatures you're up against. This means everyone in the party will have to be loaded up with as many potions as they can carry, particularly when fighting Magoomba and his magic trees or Sri and his high demon friends.



The Wilderness Around An Elven Town

The amount of punishment that monsters can absorb is amazing to behold. They take heavy wounds to the stomach and severe wounds to the head, bleed copiously, and still remain standing. You begin to wonder if anything can put them down. This is especially true of high demons, who take only a little less than forever to kill. When you're ready to take on Sri, make sure that everyone in the party is carrying as many fireball and magic blast potions as they possibly can, and hope for the best.

Dexterity is a critical factor in the game, especially as you approach your goal of entering the demon world. I recommend a minimum dex of 45 for each member of your party before taking on Sri (which is just about the last thing you need to do before going to where the portal is). The high demons with him have an average dex of 50, and they are fond of casting multiple spells, one after the other.

Don't bother with any protection spells when going up against high demons (or regular demons, either). Dispell magic is one of the first things they'll cast, and keep on casting throughout the battle, along with a number of others. A high demon can cast as many as five or six spells on his turn, which can make things very difficult for your party. Essentially, a fight with demons usually comes down to who can get off the most spells in the least amount of time. It's your magic versus theirs and you'd better have a lot of magic on your side.

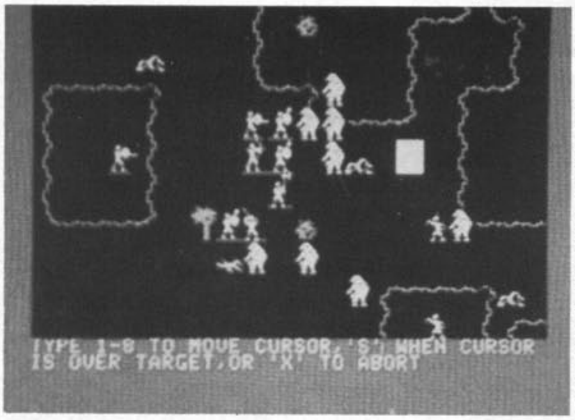
Travel in the outdoors is on foot, except when taking a ship to one of the other islands. You must keep an eye on your fatigue as you travel, because your party will tire quickly, especially in rough terrain such as forests or hills, and this fatigue will diminish their fighting abilities. On a one for one basis: a fatigue of 10 will lower weapon skills by 10 points, a fatigue of 20 will lower it by 20 points, and so on. Therefore, you will usually spend part of each day simply resting to keep from becoming too tired.

There is no travel at night. When it gets dark, the party is automatically "camped out" for the evening, whether you want it to be or not. This is also the time when hunting for food is done (so at least one party member should have this skill). If the hunt is not successful, the party must depend on either pre-purchased rations or a priest praying for food. Do note that one ration (as bought in the market) is sufficient to feed the entire party for one day. Overall, it's better to have some rations to backup the hunting skill, and save karma for more important things, such as healing injuries and raising the dead.

Daylight varies with the time of year. There are more day hours in the summer months and less in the winter months, so try to arrange lengthy expeditions for those summer months. There are only four towns in the entire game: Greenbay, on the starting island; Sea Haven and Lotharia on the Elven island; and Dwarfhold on the Dwarven island. They are all similar, each one having a Marketplace, Temple, Inn, Enchanter's Shop, Money Changer's, Alchemist Lab, and Docks.

Terms of Ensnarement

However, the game authors may be hearing from DADL, the Dwarven Anti-Defamation League. Dwarves in Eternal Dagger are portrayed as greedy and arrogant, but especially greedy. They charge double for all



items. Rations that cost 20 coppers in Lotharia are 40 coppers in Dwarfhold. It costs twice as much to have an item enchanted, or to buy an enchanted item. Even the Temple is not free. You must pay a gold piece to enter and pray. All in all, the Dwarves do not come off looking very well in this game.

One of the newer features is the ability to spend experience points to increase abilities while out in the field. In the previous game, you could only do this in town. Now, however, you can make camp at any time (even in a dungeon), and use accumulated experience points to increase skills, magic, karma, or attributes on the spot.

There are several things to watch out for. Never, never engage in combat after you have camped for the night. ONLY the two party members on guard duty will be wearing armor, and you will NOT be allowed to ready armor during combat. This means, of course, the majority of the group will be fighting pretty much naked, except for any protective items (such as rings or necklaces) that they might have.

Keep away from plants in the swamp. These Swamp Things (as they're called) are exceptionally fast moving and nasty, and can cause disease as well. There is little to be gained from fighting them, so they are best avoided whenever possible (Belaboring the obvious, dept.: Don't camp in a swamp!).

It's also a good idea to avoid dragonman patrols in the desert. Invariably, the dragonmen will be accompanied by Great Wyrms, who pop up from the sand and are quite difficult to kill (reminiscent of a book I read once...). Your party can end up decimated in no time at all.

Around the fringes of the desert, you will often run into Lizardman and their friends, the Giant (ambulatory) Cacti. The Cacti are quite capable of shooting poisonous needles at the party members, so the first spell to be cast in these cases is Missile Protection. Then, go after any spell-casting Lizardmen before they can throw a Dispel Magic. After that, you shouldn't have too much trouble with the monsters that remain.

Always have a couple of potions of Magic Blast, Fireball, or Dispel Magic with your party. Even your Sorcerer(s) should have some. When time is critical, they can be a life-saver (remember, spells cast from potions, scrolls, wands, or staves are immediate, whereas even quickcasting a spell may take more than one move.

A word about Alvis' (or Avlis, it's spelled both ways) Tower is needed, here. This is a mean place and the trip is one way. Once you enter, you must complete the dungeon to get out again. So, don't go in until you're ready (you may not want to save in this particular dungeon, either) and be prepared for some puzzles to solve, as well as monsters to fight.

The underwater city that leads to the portal is likewise a one-way trip. Once you're there, you can only go onward; there is no turning back. It's also filled with a variety of hostile sea-dwellers, so be prepared to fight every inch of the way.

The demon world can be especially nasty, since you must leave behind all your weapons and equipment before passing through to it. There will, of course, be various monsters to defeat along the way, and you'll be able to obtain some items as you progress through the rooms. However, don't expect to find much in the way of magical goodies.

One more thing: when you've gone through a dungeon, and there seems to be nowhere left to go, but you know there has to be more, walk around the inner walls of the room, and keep your eye on the direction rosette.

Documentation is the usual superb SSI job, and along with the regular manual is a booklet entitled "The Art of Adventuring in Middle World". This gem describes all the nasty things you will be meeting, gives plenty of good advice on how to survive the game, and is a definite must-read before (and while) playing.

Romancing the Crown

Overall, however, I am not as pleased with Eternal Dagger as I was with Wizard's Crown. The previous game was better balanced in regard to magic and physical combat. Here, spells play far too great a role.

Further, monsters are much stronger and take more punishment, which in turn means tactical combats last longer and are practically required for most encounters in order for your party to come out with minimal injuries.

Fatigue is another sore point. You can only journey so far each day before needing to stop and rest and frequent checks are necessary to keep an eye on how tired the party is. This extends travel time and slows down the game. It may be realistic, but there is a point where realism begins to have negative effects on playability and game enjoyment.

This is also true of dungeon combat. It may be more "true-to-life" to have the party members strung out in the corridors instead of inside the room with the monsters, but it also increases frustration as you try to maneuver to best advantage in close quarters (which is often not possible). Against a room full of spell-casters, it can even be deadly.

Bottom line: Despite some improvements, not up to the previous game; for patient players only.

The most precious treasures a fantasy gamer can find.

You've looked high and low for that rarest of fantasy games — ones that transcend mere playacting, whose spellbinding plot, superb execution and playability can ignite your imagination and propel you into a world beyond the mundane constraints of reality.

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■ **PHANTASIE III: THE WRATH OF NIKADEMUS** is much more than a sequel to the bestselling *Phantasie* and *Phantasie* II games from SSI. It is the final confrontation between your band of six heroes and the Dark Lord Nikademus.

You'll traverse across an entire continent, explore treacherous dungeons, teleport to the astral Planes of Light and Darkness — all to gather clues that will lead you to the Dark Lord and to gain the knowledge and power to destroy this evil force.

New and improved features have been added to make combat even more realistic. We've also enhanced the screen displays and increased speed of play. If you've played *Phantasie* or *Phantasie* II, you can transfer the same set of characters to this game.

Judged as either a sequel to one of the most successful fantasy series ever created, or as a complete game in its own right, *The Wrath of Nikademus* promises an enchanted odyssey of endless fun and excitement.

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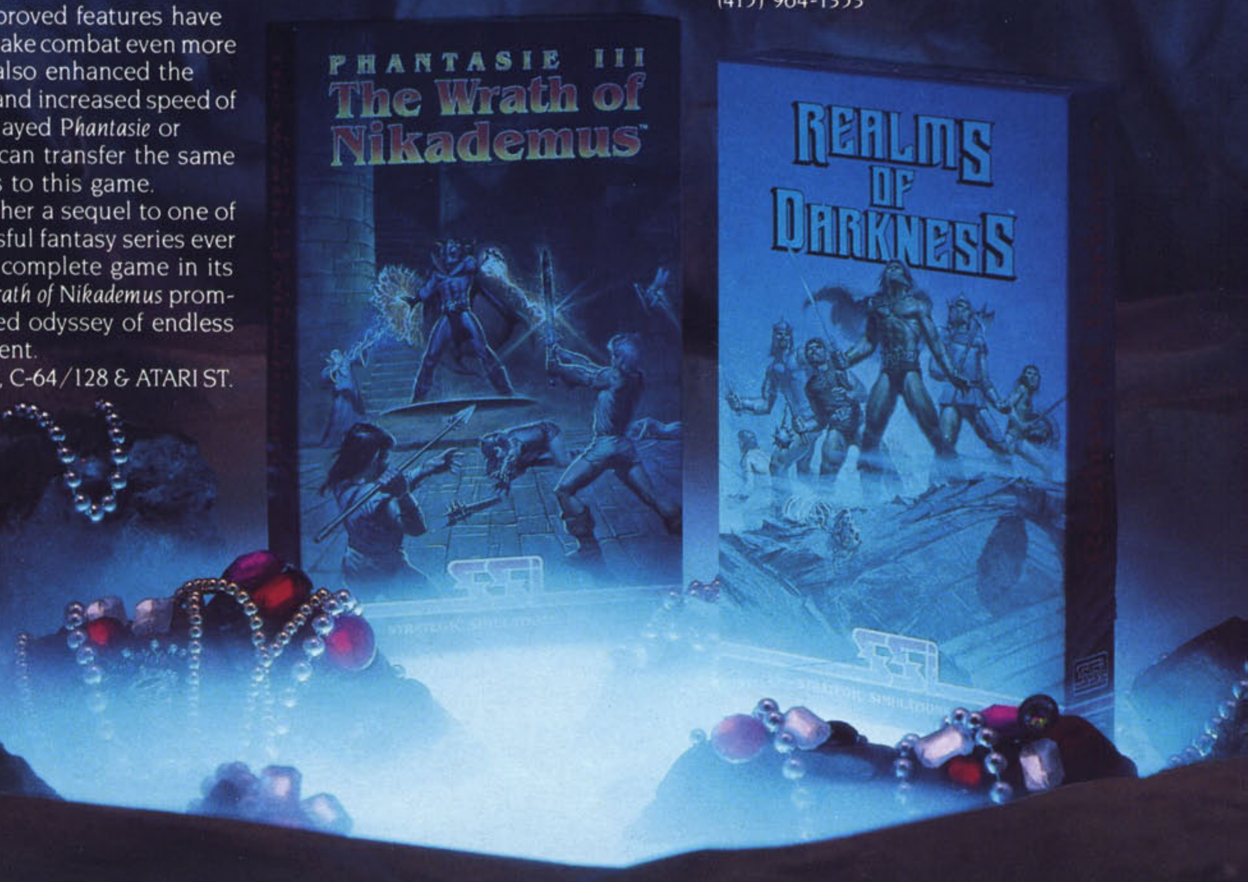
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Crocked AI To Me!

I would like to take public issue with you over the contents of an article appearing in Issue 37 (May '87) of the magazine. The article in question is titled *Kilobyte Was Here*, by M. Evan Brooks.

To get straight to point, I contend that Mr. Brooks has chosen a double- (or multi-) standard set of criteria for evaluation. Evidence for this assertion follows. The issue is the mediocre rating given to **SSG**'s *Battlefront* because of an alleged failure of the battalion commanders to act as Mr. Brooks expects. By that criteria, I was astounded to see **SSI**'s *Kampfgruppe* and *War in Russia* each achieve the maximum rating. If the performance of the artificial intelligence is to be the criteria by which our game was judged, I maintain that Mr. Brooks should so judge the other games he has evaluated.

In *Kampfgruppe*, every combat formation in a friendly force can be maneuvered into the same square! What's more, they can all fight and no adverse effect is suffered from cramming a full division into a 200 yard frontage. To top it off, this is the most effective fighting formation in the game and the computer, when controlling an attacking force, very often ends up with most of its men in such a gigantic killer stack! Even the most passionate advocate of the game must recognize the absurdity of this situation. Yet, Mr. Brooks maintains that the only defect in this game is " . . . the lack of joystick input."

In *War in Russia*, the Germans can take a summer holiday in the north, while sending all the Panzers south. Despite the fact that no borders have been busted, the Russians retreat all the way to Minsk. Reputation is a powerful thing! Meanwhile, every single tank the Germans possess can annihilate the Russians in the south and drive unopposed into Moscow from the south! Unopposed, because the rest of the Russians stolidly await their destiny at Minsk, bravely suffering the total inactivity on their front. Despite this, Mr. Brooks asserts that the artificial intelligence problems in the game occur only " . . . in the later stages."

In *Battlefront*, we have developed a generic intelligence structure, a system which is not peculiar to a particular battlefield or order of battle. Despite the fact that it cannot be pre-programmed, but must be applicable to any situation, it is certainly smarter than *Kampfgruppe* or *War in Russia*. There are no sucker punches in *Battlefront*. Naturally, subordinate battalions may not do exactly what you wanted (the cry of defeated generals through the ages), but the computer opponent is consistently capable of finding and fighting the enemy. To beat the computer in *Battlefront*, you have to fight fair and square.

In most of our competitor's products, the artificial intelligence module is not an integral part of the game, but a module tacked on at the end, providing a very moderate opponent. Reviews in your magazine recognize this fact, but do not pan the games on this account. Why is *Battlefront* treated differently? By any account, it both attempts and achieves more than the competition.

Artificial intelligence is critical to computer wargames. It is also very difficult to do properly. Make allowances for this difficulty by all means, but let us have one standard for doing so.

Ian Trout
Director, Strategic Studies Group Pty.
Drummoyne, N.S.W.Australia

Ed: It is regrettable that Mr. Brooks' choice of terms suggested a more negative evaluation of the game than was intended. The use of the adjective "ambitious" was designed to reflect the fact that your design attempted more than the competition. It was Mr. Brooks' opinion that the effort did not totally succeed. Unfortunately, what "came across" was that Battlefront was a failure. Emphatically it is not! See the final paragraph for more on this.

As for your remarks concerning Kampfgruppe, when presented with your comments, SSI conceded that there is no stacking limit in the game. However, they continued, Gary Grigsby made a design decision not to have a stacking limit because he felt it added an artificiality to the system. The computer opponent does not intentionally pile troops into one area. Instead, the computer groups units according to objectives. If there is a large concentration, it is due to the location of an objective, not a "sucker punch." It is interesting to note that the stacking limitation was enforced in Battlegroup (Grigsby's follow-up to Kampfgruppe), but that game has never been as popular its predecessor.

As for War in Russia, the designer felt that Minsk was a reasonable opening move in order to facilitate consolidation in the face of superior (at least, normally) Germans. Paul Murray, who programmed the AI routines established an auto-retreat in order to establish such a consolidated line. Nevertheless, Paul states that the AI does search to find where Panzer Corps go and the program will reinforce according to where the most Panzers are.

By the way, our readers give Battlefront a high rating on our Strategy game list and our editorial board felt the product was significant enough to nominate it for "Strategy Game of the Year."

Stalingrad Complaint

It has been said that game designers fall into two categories: those that are unhappy because their game has not been reviewed and those who are unhappy about what the reviewer said. After reading M. Evan Brooks' review of *Stalingrad Campaign*, I fall firmly into the latter. I am upset that Mr. Brooks made no attempt to actually review the game. He gives neither a description of the game system nor does he seem to appreciate the viewpoint of the game. I can only conclude that this article should have been subtitled, "What I Don't Like About *Stalingrad Campaign*."

Astoundingly, Mr. Brooks criticizes

Continued on page 54

Goodbye 'G' Ratings

The New Wave of Adult Entertainment Software Part Two

By John Williams



In the first installment of this three part series, Sierra On-Line Marketing Director John Williams reviewed currently available and soon-to-be-released computer software titles that contain adult themes and subject matter. In this second installment, Mr. Williams will chronicle how the computer-owning public, the computer software industry, and the world-at-large has reacted to the release of computer software that some people may find offensive.

The scene is a discount software store in the heart of California's conservative Orange County. It is a Saturday and the store's aisles are packed with customers seeking to peruse the latest software offerings. Like most software stores, people are behaving as though the store were a library. Even children seem to be on the best behavior while mom and dad browse the shelves and the silence is only occasionally broken by a computer's beep and a disk drive's whirr. Suddenly, a customer completely freaks out:

"I can't believe this! It's disgusting! Even computers aren't safe for my children, anymore! I want the manager! I won't shop here, again!..."

The story you have just read is true (it happened about six months ago) and the general pandemonium which ensued after that scene was caused when one shopper had her first exposure to the coming wave of adult software. The item which inspired her outburst was not even an adult software product. It was a promotional teeshirt for **Infocom**'s *Leather Goddesses of Phobos*. The teeshirt carried the caption "A dirty mind is a terrible thing to waste." She was offended by both the caption and the game's title, since she said the title "...had deviant sexual overtones and references to bondage and other unnatural acts." If you walk into that discount software store today, you will not find the *Leather Goddesses* teeshirt on display. In fact, *Leather Goddesses* and other games like it may only be found on the highest software shelves in the back of the store. This store, and the other 60+ stores that are part of this successful chain, are not allowed to display adult-oriented software products on sale racks or include them in special displays. The software chain will not include adult software titles in its extensive newspaper and radio advertising program and store employees are not allowed to wear their complimentary *Leather Goddesses of Phobos* teeshirts to work anymore.

It is true that this incident could be viewed as an isolated act. We have not seen "preachers" picketing the local **Computerland** nor the police raiding software stores in order to arrest employees on pornography charges. Indeed, no software publishers have been arrested for "contributing to the delinquency of a hacker." Nevertheless, this single act of protest may be viewed as the "first shot fired" in a coming backlash against adult-oriented computer products.

In the seven years since Ronald Reagan became president, the United States has taken a noticeable swing to "the right." The government-sponsored Meese Commission has linked explicit sexual material to almost everything, including violent crime. Tipper Gore and her band of senator's wives have brought the recording industry to its knees with threats of imposed industry-wide record rating systems and air-wave censorship. On April 16th of this year, the Federal Communications Commission rewrote its own broadcasting standards on what can and cannot be said over the airwaves. In addition to the infamous "seven words you can't say on television or on the radio" ruling that was made in 1976, the FCC now prohibits "... language or materials that depict or describe, in terms patently offensive to community standards or the broadcast media, sexual or excretory activities or sexual organs." This "generic" decency statute will allow the FCC to pull the operating license of any broadcaster or broadcasting company that says something potentially "naughty" on the air.

Therefore, it would seem that this is exactly the wrong time for a fledgling software industry to challenge standards of public decency. However, software publishers like **Avalon Hill, Sierra,** and **Infocom** have all marketed software titles which are very suggestive in nature. To the surprise of almost no one, most of these titles have made a place for themselves on industry "hot lists" and bestseller charts.

There are other kinds of reactions to adult software, too. A **Mindscape** executive didn't even want to talk about adult content in his corporation's products and asked, "Why make a big deal over nothing?" Cynthia Weiss of **Infocom** notes, "When we went out to sell *Leather Goddesses of Phobos*, we got complaints that the game was too tame...." The customer support manager at **Sierra** reports that she receives complaints from parents when she refuses to answer their children's requests for hints on *Leisure Suit Larry*. In spite of those who deny that there is a problem or try to minimize public reaction, adult themes in computer software have garnered the wrath of some people.

Custer's Revenge, an adult software title from **Milkway Productions**, has been the target of a protest by Women Against Pornography and was presented with a lawsuit by, at least, one major computer hardware manufacturer. Sierra's *Leisure Suit Larry* has been banned in South Africa, but the company feels that this is all right because they are boycotting South Africa due to apartheid. Further, the Moral Majority and its ilk recently targeted a protest at a

Louisiana publisher who was producing a buyer's guide for adult software.

One small adult-oriented software publisher (who wishes to remain anonymous) said that he has received a multitude of "hate mail" coming from the Bible Belt. Much of the hate mail is enclosed in the pre-paid envelopes that he has provided for customers to use in direct orders. Not only does he have to wade through this hate mail while he looks for orders, but he has to realize that he paid postage on each one.

In addition, many of the software publishers that we talked to mentioned that some of their largest customers would not take on software with adult content. I called some of these customers, but most preferred not to comment on the article. Perhaps, these customers are as afraid of being labeled "too conservative" as they are of being called "pornographers." Nevertheless, one major mail order outfit that takes a public stand against adult-oriented software and is not ashamed is **Protecto Enterprises** of Illinois. The company "...was founded on Christian principles and ethics and will not sell any product that goes against those principles." Adult software that contains adult themes and any game having elements of fantasy-role playing will not be sold by **Protecto.**

The latter proscription should remind readers that the protest against and banning of computer software is not confined to software which contains elements of s-e-x. **Microprose Software** recently found themselves in an interesting situation. This top maker of simulation-style arcade games opened up a European distribution network, only to find that its offerings were banned from West Germany's markets due to excessive violence. The *Ultima* series of games and all fantasy role-playing games, computerized or not, have long been the target of fundamentalist religious groups because of their alleged elements from the occult and portrayals of powerful evil magicians. It seems to this author that any game with more elements of realism than Pacman can become the target of protest and boycott.

Whether or not adult software is a threat to our national morals or a harmless form of entertainment, it is coming and due to arrive in a hurry. In the final installment of "Goodbye G Ratings," we will look at how makers of software warn potential buyers of adult themes in their products and what, if any, attempts the software industry will make to impose self regulation. We will also look at how computer software could be judged by the same standards as movies and offer some personal opinions on how the adult software industry will grow and what, if anything, the opponents of adult software can do to get their opinions heard.

Continued from page 51

Stalingrad Campaign because its scenarios follow history! He complains that "The German must initially take advantage of his numerical and equipment superiority. No matter how successful his play, the German will eventually be forced to assume the defensive. The Russian offensive cannot be avoided . . . ." I must ask, "*What does Mr. Brooks want???*" The *Stalingrad Campaign* is, after all, a historical study. If he doesn't want to face the Soviets, he should play only the Case Blau scenario (which ends just prior to the Soviet counter-offensive). I also take issue with his claim that, knowing the Soviet offensive is coming, the German player can prematurely "... suspend his offensive in order to assume the defensive" and thus achieve victory. In this, he fails to consider (or even mention) what I feel is a major innovation of the game system. In *Stalingrad Campaign*, the computer has an active role as the player's Supreme Commander (Hitler or Stalin). The Supreme Commander sets the strategic goals and posture (offense or defense) for the player. In this guise, the computer continually evaluates the player's performance and reviews his orders to insure that the player is following his strategic directives. If the player is unable or unwilling to follow the Supreme Commander's guidance, then the player loses prestige and victory points. In extreme cases of insubordination (such as what Mr. Brooks suggests), the Supreme Commander may even countermand the player's orders. For example, if Hitler has ordered a general offensive toward Stalingrad, but the player digs in and assumes a defensive posture, then the computer will intervene and direct individual units to attack. In summary, if the player wishes to retain control of his forces, then he should not blatantly disregard the strategic goals of the campaign.

Mr. Brooks denigrates the map for being dull and states that " . . . what appears to be the road network is, in reality, the supply network." The reviewer had previously criticized the game's documentation for its "paucity." If he had read the game's documentation carefully, he would have noted the following: "The maps show the locations of major towns, cities, rivers, *and rail lines* . . . ." Nowhere do the rules claim that the map shows road networks. Ever since the U.S. Civil War, railroads have been used for supply, not tactical movement. Every map of southern Russia (from both German and Soviet sources) consulted during the design of *Stalingrad Campaign* shows the locations of rail lines, but rarely roads. There were no autobahns in Russia in 1942. Mr. Brooks' criticism is the result of his own mistake, not mine.

The reviewer erroneously states that " . . .there is no way to order a strategic encirclement." This is absolutely false. The game is very unforgiving of the player who allows his supply lines to be cut.

Concerning limited intelligence, Mr. Brooks criticizes *Stalingrad Campaign* because it does not provide the player with a unit-by-unit statement of enemy strength. He claims that " . . . probes and battles would reveal [an enemy unit's strength] within a reasonable period." In...the encirclement of Stalingrad during Operation Uranus, the Soviets believed that 75,000 German troops were in the city. In reality, there were more than 250,000 there. Rather than provide the player with a historically unjustifiable, but accurate estimate of enemy unit strength or a uselessly inaccurate (but historically correct) estimate, it was decided the limit the player's information to that which would be relevant to the central HQ's staff: namely, the identity of enemy units engaged, estimates of front-level enemy strengths (engaged and in reserve) and recent losses for both sides, enemy intentions, weather forecasts, etc.

Another "fog of war" feature that Mr. Brooks didn't like is that units do not always move as quickly toward their objectives as he would wish. He states that "As a staff officer, one would know how far a corps/army could move within a week . . . ." Mr. Brooks should also know (as a staff officer) that units *hardly ever* move as quickly as HQ expects. That the player should experience a degree of frustration is deliberate. *Stalingrad Campaign* was intended to give the player an exposure to the trials and tribulations of command. . . .

Mr. Brooks notes that the game's documentation did not mention that the East Bank of Stalingrad is forbidden to Axis units. Although I must admit that the rules fail to mention this (this detail was misplaced somewhere between the designer and the printer), the program does issue a warning (without penalty) should the German player attempt to order units to go there. I find it difficult to understand how this can be construed as more than a very minor flaw in the game.

In conclusion, it is clear that Mr. Brooks did not like *Stalingrad Campaign*. As a reviewer, though, he has the responsibility to do more than just list his gripes. It is not until the last sentence of the review that he mentions that the game has some innovative concepts. That he fails to describe these innovations, but instead offers shallow criticisms such as the above is unforgivable. It seems to me that he has absolutely, positively missed the point of the game.

Bill Nichols
Designer of *Stalingrad Campaign*
Silver Spring, MD

Ed.: Then there were these comments. (I now know what it must feel like to be Howard Cosell's editor!):

The Stalingrad article is, by far, the best review ever to appear in CGW. [Also], Mr. Brooks' evaluation of WWII games [in Kilobyte Was Here] was also right on. I have most all of the games evaluated and agree with him on almost every point.

J. Dale Hight
Los Angeles

More from Evan Brooks.

R.F. Batchelder
Pembroke Pines FL

Tell Jay Selover (Fiery Ambush) and Evan Brooks (three articles), "great work"in Number 37. Keep it up. I also enjoy the work Vince DeNardo is doing on the art.

J. Dunn
Seabrook, MD

BREACH

"I was moving a squad of four of my best through the *kehst*-beridden jungles of Kiskismok, when suddenly Darrow's detector picks up what looks like a couple of life forms 50 meters out."



"'Nothin' but a couple of those brachiators,' he says to me. Just then Darrow takes it through the chest."

"We all drop into the mud, flipping through our helmet displays trying to find out where the shot came from when I hear this rumbling. More like I *feel* this rumbling. An' then there it is. A battle robot."



"Hsiang shoots the thing in its sensory grid with a bolt, but it doesn't do much good 'cause he's a psionic talent and they don't give 'em half-way decent guns. It starts tracking him with its dual guns and suddenly he takes some hot plasma too. Now it's just me and the kid, Yamaguchi."

"'Guchi,' I said, 'Direct your fire into the lifters so it can't move. These things are pretty lousy about protecting their undersides.' So like he was a vet of 20 drops, he rises to one knee and hits the thing right in the lifters. And then he does it twice more."



"'One battle robot: out of action,' he says. I toss an energy grenade at the hulk just to make sure and then we start the long job of carrying the boys north, where we know the landing boat'll be."

The Serayachi Campaign—Sgt. Robert Sherwood, FWSF *Ret.*

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Taking A Peek

Continued from page 6

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Chandler, AZ 85226

FAMILY FEUD: This is the closest you can come to playing the game without having Richard Dawson kiss your wife. It's played just exactly like the game show, but you have to supply your own prizes (and kisses). Apple, C-64, IBM ($12.95). Circle Reader Service #19.

JEOPARDY: Based on the most cerebral of the game shows, trivia fans will enjoy this faithful adaptation of the television program. Apple, C-64, IBM ($12.95). Circle Reader Service #20.

WHEEL OF FORTUNE: If you've ever wondered whether Pat or Vanna is most important to the show, note that this adaptation kept Vanna and let's the computer perform Pat's job. Apple, C-64, IBM ($12.95). Circle Reader Service #21.

Strategic Studies Group
1747 Orleans Ct.
Walnut Creek, CA 94598

BATTLES IN NORMANDY: Eight western front scenarios based on a refined Battlefront system. Scenarios include: Omaha Beach, Sword Beach, Utah Beach, Cherbourg, Carentan, Villers Bocage, Goodwood, and Epsom. Apple, C-64 ($39.95). Circle Reader Service #23.

Strategic Simulations, Inc.
1046 N. Rengstorff Ave.
Mountain View, CA 94043

ROADWAR EUROPA: Don't expect to meet the Clark Griswald family in this trip to Europe, but you can transfer your villainous thugs from Roadwar 2000 into this sequel to the popular post-holocaust strategy game. Apple, C-64, IBM ($39.95), ST ($44.95). Circle Reader Service #24.

CONVERSIONS RECEIVED



For the Amiga:

The Black Cauldron (Sierra)
Hardball (Accolade)
Leisure Suit Larry (Sierra)
Phantasie III: Wrath of Nikademus(SSI)

For the Apple II:

Aliens (Activision)
Killed Until Dead (Accolade)

For the Apple II GS:

Silent Service (Microprose)

For the Atari 8-bit:

Ace of Aces (Accolade)
The Eternal Dagger (SSI)

For the Atari ST:

221B Baker St. (Datasoft)
The Eternal Dagger (SSI)
Hardball (Accolade)
Phantasie III: Wrath of Nikademus (SSI)
Rings of Zilfin (SSI)

For the Commodore 64/128:

Amnesia (EA)

For the IBM:

Mean 18 Famous Course Disk (Accolade)
Robot Rascals (EA)

THE NAME GAME

Continued from page 41

microcomputer games is **Avalon Hill**. Since they published the first wargames that most of us ever played, we were very curious about the origin of their name. It seems that Avalon Hill began in 1958 as The Avalon Company, named after the suburban community where Charles S. Roberts (yes, the one the award is named after), founder of the company, resided. Since, however, the game and hobby industries work so closely together, there was some confusion with regard to The Avalon Company which published games and The Avalon Manufacturing Company which made paint-by-number kits. Therefore, Roberts changed the name by adding the designation "Hill" to the name. This was because Charles Roberts lives, to this day, high on a hill overlooking the community of Avalon.

We started with **Three-Sixty**, so we will also come full circle. Tom Frisina's departure from Accolade to form his own company started us thinking about whole question of names in the first place so let's finish with his former company, ,**Accolade** name. Alan Miller told us that the new company was deliberately looking for a name at the beginning of the alphabet (for obvious public relations advantages). Alan Miller opened his Webster's Dictionary and started looking at words which began with "A." When he came to "accolade," he liked the fact that the word denoted praise and felt that this was the image of the kind of product they wanted to create.

AH GAMES OF STRATEGY The Avalon Hill Game Company

ACCOLADE

Interestingly enough, other companies with their roots at Activision have used the same approach. Garry Kitchen's new company is to be called Absolute and another new company is to be called Acclaim.

"What is in a name?" the immortal bard asked rhetorically. Apparently, there is much more than we expected. We hope to share the history of other company names in the future.

RUSSIA
The Great War in the East 1941-1945

Continued from page 14

will actually move to seize the objective.

This method of movement is ESSENTIAL. Check your units carefully, and utilize hold orders to maintain a valid defensive front. While massive and obvious holes will appear, it is rare that either side will be capable of complete exploitation.

Historically, although Germany's defeat at Stalingrad in 1942 determined that Germany would not *win* the war, it was the Battle of Kursk (1943) that determined that Germany would *lose* the war. The player must be aware of his objectives, and willing to adjust them depending on the circumstances. Judicious employment and not headless offensives bear the fruits of victory.

Observations

The scenarios (Leningrad, Stalingrad and Kursk) are tight-run situations. They are interesting, well balanced, and useful as valid tutorials. Yet, they do not teach the offensive-defensive balance that the Campaign requires.

The Campaign is the *piece de resistance*. Playing as OKH alone, monthly turns will allow one to complete the Campaign in four hours. However, one's computer Army Group commanders are rather dense, and it is difficult to win. The best option is to play OKH, as well as the three Army Groups. In this case, a Campaign will require about 25 hours to play, but offers the most interesting simulation and the time requirement is minimal when compared with the period covered (in comparison, SSI's *War in Russia* would require over 200 hours).

Conclusions

Despite its problems, *Russia* has much to recommend it. Playing the Soviets is too easy, but the real test for wargamers has always been the Axis. Taking command of OKH and seeking a victory is a true test of skill, and for that reason, this reviewer considers *Russia* to carry a high recommendation.

In conclusion, *Russia* is the most playable simulation of the Eastern Front on the market. Innovative and interesting, any problems it has are obviated by its successes. Nach Osten!! (To the East!)

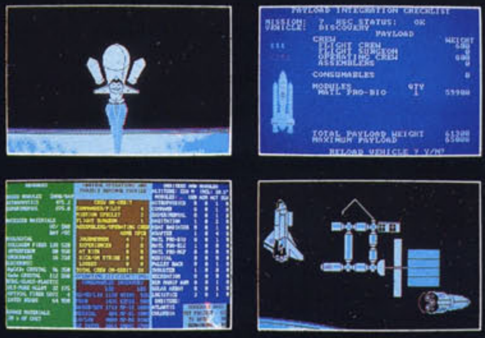
POSTSCRIPT: I would like to thank John Gleason (SSG's stateside representative) for his guidance and explanation of *Russia*'s nuances. While he never gave solutions, he did point this reviewer in the proper direction, and his enthusiasm proved infectious in the end.



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Continued from page 30

venient, but speeds up game play considerably.

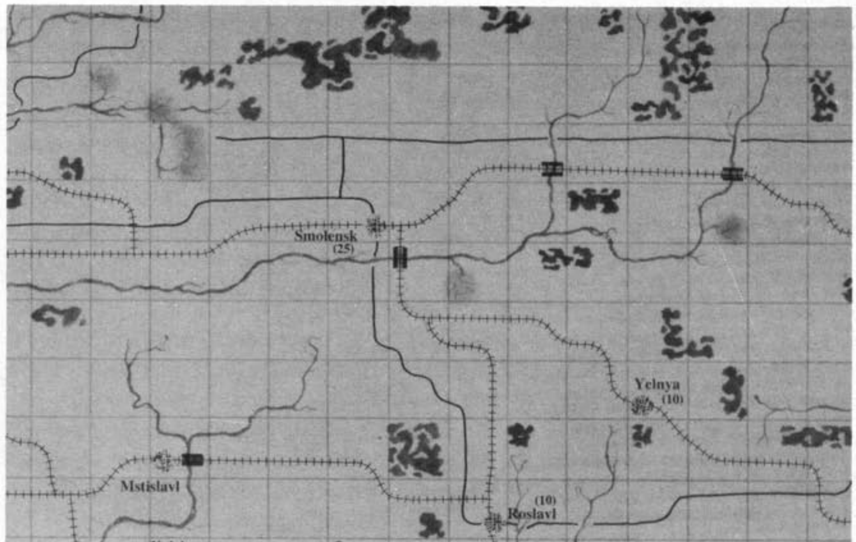
The graphics in *Guderian* are better than its forerunner in that national designation, unit types, and terrain are easy to identify on the screen. This is particularly true with a color monitor, but players with monochrome monitors will have no great difficulty in identifying terrain as they did in *Gulf Strike*. There is no strategic map available on screen (only a small portion of the entire map is visible at any one time) since the printed map enclosed with the game offers that service.

The sound in *Guderian* serves primarily to confirm movement orders (e.g. selecting units). This auditory confirmation is something of an innovation and we'd like to see more of it in future games.

Combat Readiness Report (Game Play)

With a first rate gaming system simulating one of the most decisive battles of the twentieth century, you would think that the game could not miss. There are, however, a few "near misses" in this game. First, the game nowhere addresses the role of air power in its system. Since close tactical air support by the Luftwaffe was critical to the initial German successes, this seems to be a serious omission.

The second and even more serious weakness lies in the game's combat system. In this system, there are two types of attacks, Overruns and General Assaults. Units or "stacks" may only be attacked once per turn, however. While this may sound innocuous enough in theory, it means in practice that the player cannot actually use some of the same tactics which were employed historically by the Germans. The Germans regularly attempted to break through a line at several points, surround an enemy position with several strong positions of their own, and crush the enemy between the assembled forces. In *Guderian*, armchair generals will discover to their chagrin that only one, that is correct, *one* of his



stacks can attack the encircled enemy per turn! That doesn't ring true.

Debriefing (Evaluation)

Guderian is a *very* playable game with options that help gamers avoid some of the complexity and lugubrious pace of other products. Our reservations concerning the combat system not withstanding, strategy gamers will find this latest offering from **Avalon Hill** an Eastern Front simulation with a difference.

Ultima Versus Wizardry

(Continued from page 18)

tended to evoke a different emotion. Adams states that the player character "Werdna"s will undoubtably begin with a lust for revenge, but feels that the experiences they encounter should cause that to change. In fact, there are even multiple endings to the game "...because there are many paths to trod in the search for power." The sensitive player may discover that the most seemingly expedient solution to a problem or convenient route is not always the optimal one. In fact, "Werdna" may cause more thinking about life, right and wrong than any game since *Ultima IV*.

Speaking of *Ultima*s, Lord British was concerned enough about the criticism which the fantasy role-playing genre receives to invest thought on what the game itself does to the players. He did not want to be guilty of designing a game which implied that violence was the answer to all or even many of life's problems. That is why he, along with Roe Adams, developed the eight virtues to be measured in *Ultima IV*. The purpose of the design was to challenge the players to be better people after finishing the game than when they started. That is why the game begins with the gypsy fortune-teller and tests one's responses to various situations. If answered honestly, one can create a psychometric profile of themselves. It is to be hoped that one doesn't create a worse profile in the course of the game.

In *Ultima V*, kharma points take the place of the psychometric profile used in *IV*. Nevertheless, Lord British has not allowed matters to be measured in simple blacks and whites. Lord British is concerned about getting a psychological response, a personal emotional involvement, out of the player. In an adventure which reminds one of Dostoevsky's "The Grand Inquisitor" in *The Brothers Karamazov*, Blackthorn tortures your friend, Yolo (who has been with you since the earliest *Ultima*s. It is a "no win" situation which is guaranteed to infuriate you as a player and will probably cause you to swear revenge upon Blackthorn. The irony is that Blackthorn truly believes that his type of "moral" and "physical" control is necessary in order to keep anarchy and chaos at bay. Players may actually feel guilty opposing him. Yet, he has become evil in order to accomplish a supposed good.

Such literary-psychological devices to bring the player into the scenario are effective on more than one level. They motivate the player to action, but they also force the player to think about why he/she does things certain ways. In the Dostoevsky reference above, Christ returns to earth during the Inquisition. He wants to know why His clergy are using ungodly means to persecute His people. The Inquisitor sentences Jesus to burn at the stake as a heretic and sadly admits: "We have taken the sword of Caesar, and in taking it, of course, have rejected Thee and followed *him*." The torture of Yolo may be a literary warning to those who believe that might makes right and the ends justify the means, to those who believe that they have the right to force anyone to believe what they believe.

Other themes in the latest adventure force one to cogitate upon virtue, as well. The previous adventure taught the player about the worthiness of eight different virtues. The new adventure instructs by means of negative examples. The Shadowlords are the opposities of these worthy virtues and their influence vividly illustrates the ugliness of their antitheses when found in human society. If ever a computer game attempted to inculcate positive values, it is this series of adventures designed by a man who still receives regular hate mail from the Bible Belt.

First Impressions

The release of these two titles within days *[Ed. or weeks?]* of each other is undoubtably an historic publishing event in our industry. Both designs follow logically upon their predecessors and both are technological advancements beyond their antecedents. Both designs already have a large following of adherents (although there is a large overlap, as well) and are virtually assured of being best sellers. Both designs offer the "biggest" playing environment yet for their playing systems. Both designs will cause numerous sleepless nights before their 150-200 hours plus of playing time are finished. It is likely that their relative merits will be debated and discussed throughout the next two years. Adventure gamers are in for two unbelievable treats in these products.

Reader Input Device

RID 40 (Card at pg. 8)

On this page, a number of games and articles are listed for evaluation, as well as some general interest questions. Please consider PRESENTATION (graphics, sound, packaging and documentation); GAME DESIGN (design, playability and level of interest); and LIFE (does the game wear well?). Please rate each game you have played and article you have read from 1 (terrible) through 9 (outstanding). In the "Comments" space, please answer the general interest question and/or feel free to write a letter to the editor (in which case, please include your name and home town).

Games

1. Gettysburg (SSI)
2. Kampfgruppe (SSI)
3. Gunship (MicPr)
4. Chessmaster (SftTWks)
5. Decision in Desert (MicPr)
6. Mech Brigade (SSI)
7. Battle Antietam (SSI)
8. Crusade Europe (MicPr)
9. War in Russia (SSI)
10. Ultima IV (Orign)
11. Starflight (EA)
12. Might/Magic (NewWrd)
13. Bard's Tale (EA)
14. Bard's Tale II (EA)
15. WC Leader Bd. (Accss)
16. Wizard's Crown (SSI)
17. Spellbreaker (Infcm)
18. F-15 Strike Eagle (MicPr)
19. Knight Diamonds (SirTc)
20. Into Eagles Nest (Mdsc)
21. Borrowed Time (Actvsn)
22. The Hobbit (Add-Wes)
23. Darkhorn (AH)
24. Cauldron (Brdrbnd)
25. Lurking Horror (Infcm)
26. Stationfall (Infcm)
27. Street Spts. Baseball (Epx)
28. Russia (SSG)
29. Pirates (MicPr)
30. DefCon 5 (Cosmi)
31. President Elect '88 (SSI)
32. E.O.S. (EA)
33. Guderian (AH)
34. Rebel Chickamauga (SSI)
35. NBA (AH)
36. War So. Pac. (SSI)
37. Destroyer (Epyx)

Articles

38. Russia Review
39. Fantasy Previews
40. Outfoxed
41. Lurking Horror
42. E.O.S. Review
43. Guderian Review
44. Chickamauga Review
45. Ed. Games List
46. Name Game
47. Sports Scoreboard
48. Eternal Dagger
49. Goodbye G Ratings II
50. Letters

General Interest

51. What percentage of time do you use your computer for business? games?
52. Would you like to see ads for business software in CGW?

Game Ratings

Gettysburg continued to hold the high ground on the strategy side, but attrition dropped the rating to a slightly less impressive 7.97. Kampfgruppe counterattacked past Gunship for a 7.72, giving SSI a formidable position throughout the top twenty. In the fantasy realm, Ultima IV ascended to its former glory and Wizardry I regained its bridesmaid's status while fantasy aficionados wonder if sequels V and IV respectively will dethrone these vintage hits. Starflight soared to third place, while Might and Magic muscled its way to fourth position.

Strategy Top 50

Name	Mfg	Machine	Tms Rtd	Avg Rsp	Rating
Gettysburg	SSI	Ap,At,C,I	4	46	7.97
Kampfgruppe	SSI	Many	9	100	7.72
Gunship	MicPr	Am,C,I	2	46	7.69
Chessmaster 2000	EA	Many	5	38	7.60
M.U.L.E.	EA	C,At	18	77	7.44
Decision in Desert	MicPr	C,At	5	43	7.41
Mech Brigade	SSI	C,Ap	8	62	7.40
Battle of Antietam	SSI	C,Ap,At	6	47	7.28
Crusade in Europe	MicPr	C,Ap,At	4	84	7.24
War in Russia	SSI	Ap,At	9	64	7.24
War in So. Pac.	SSI	Ap,C	1	20	7.22
Seven Cities Gold	EA	Many	7	118	7.20
Battlefront	SSG	Ap	4	36	7.19
Battlecruiser	SSI	Ap,At,C	2	26	7.19
Carriers at War	SSG	C,Ap	4	81	7.17
Europe Ablaze	SSG	C,Ap	5	34	7.17
Ancient Art of War	Brodr	I,M	7	33	7.13
Reach for Stars	SSG	C,Ap	4	50	7.12
Battlegroup	SSI	C,Ap	3	37	7.11
Combat Leader	SSI	C,At	5	56	7.11
Computer Baseball	SSI	Many	6	36	7.10
Micro Lg Baseball	MicLg	Many	6	36	7.09
Defender Crown	MstDsg	Many	3	25	7.09
Heart of Africa	EA	C	3	27	7.09
Star Fleet I	Intstel	Ap,At,C,I	5	38	7.08
Colonial Conquest	SSI	C,At,ST	3	60	7.07
Oper Mkt Garden	SSI	C,Ap,At	4	58	7.06
Under Fire	AH	Ap	6	23	7.06
Silent Service	MicPr	C,At	6	108	7.06
3-in-1 Football	Hafner	C,Ap,I	2	20	7.05
Carrier Force	SSI	C,Ap,At	5	108	7.04
Flight Sim II	SubLg	C,Ap,At,I	6	84	7.03
Balance of Power	Mndscp	M,I,Am,Ap	3	23	6.97
Conflict in Vietnam	MicPr	C,At	4	20	6.96
Warship	SSI	Ap,At,C	2	42	6.96
Lords of Conquest	EA	Ap,At,C	3	42	6.93
Field of Fire	SSI	C,At	5	67	6.93
U.S.A.A.F.	SSI	C,Ap,At	2	26	6.92
NAM	SSI	C,Ap,At	3	24	6.88
Ace of Aces	Accld	C	1	28	6.86
Cosmic Balance	SSI	C,Ap,At	5	84	6.83
Bomb Alley	SSI	Ap	4	32	6.82
Eastern Front	APX	At	4	61	6.81
Roadwar 2000	SSI	Ap,C	3	34	6.80
Computer Ambush	SSI	C,Ap,At	6	49	6.78
Gato	SpHb	Ap,I,M	3	79	6.77
Gulf Strike	AH	At	4	33	6.75
Geopolitique 1990	SSI	Ap,C	3	29	6.73
Universe	OmTrnd	Ap,I,M	3	46	6.73
Destroyer	Epyx	Ap,C	1	29	6.66

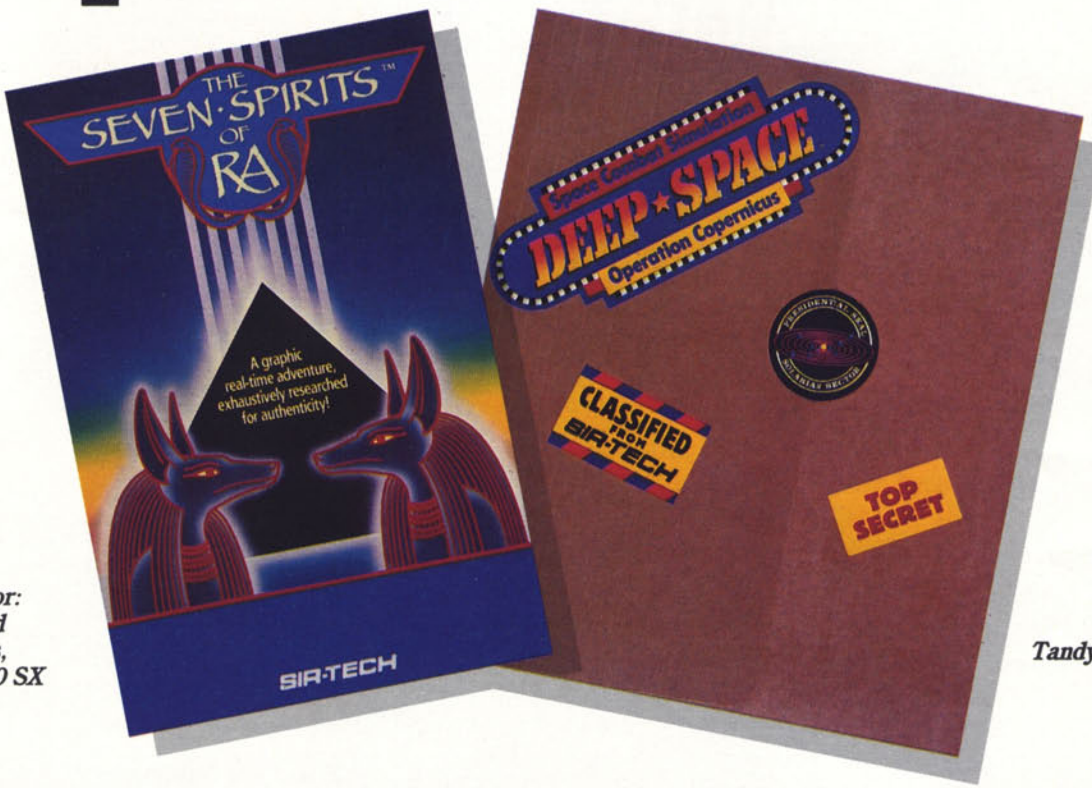
Adventure/Action Top 50

Name	Mfg	Machine	Tms Rtd	Avg Rsp	Rating
Ultima IV	Orign	C,Ap,At	6	94	7.91
Wizardry I	SirTc	Ap,I	20	72	7.69
Starflight	EA	I	5	26	7.68
Might and Magic	NewWrd	Ap	2	23	7.67
Bard's Tale	EA	C,Ap	6	78	7.66
Bard's Tale II	EA	Ap,C	3	48	7.65
Ultima III	Orign	Many	14	105	7.55
WC Leader Board	Accss	C	1	22	7.36
Wizard's Crown	SSI	C,Ap	5	55	7.27
Spellbreaker	Infcm	Many	4	25	7.25
F-15 Strike Egl	MicPr	Many	5	140	7.21
Knight of Diamonds	SirTc	Ap	11	53	7.19
Legacy of Llygamyn	SirTc	Ap,I	7	58	7.18
Phantasie	SSI	C,Ap	8	70	7.16
Borrowed Time	Actvsn		1	27	7.15
Archon I	EA	Many	10	98	7.14
One on One	EA	Many	7	74	7.13
Questron	SSI	C,Ap,At	5	97	7.13
Phantasie II	SSI	Ap,C	3	33	7.11
Elite	Fireb	C,Ap	5	45	7.10
Zork Series	Infcm	Many	7	122	7.09
Pinball Const. Set	EA	Many	4	47	7.08
Lode Runner	Brbund	Many	6	60	7.07
Sorcerer	Infcm	Many	5	58	7.07
Enchanter	Infcm	Many	4	45	7.02
Ultima II	Orign	Ap	8	61	7.00
Leather Goddesses	Inf	Many	2	31	6.98
Winter Games	Epyx	Many	1	37	6.97
Ultima I	Orign	Ap	2	48	6.96
Auto Duel	Orign	Ap	2	31	6.95
Moebius	Orign	Many	1	21	6.95
Deadline	Infcm	Ap,At,I	3	44	6.94
Rogue	Epyx	Many	1	26	6.92
Galactic Advntres	SSI	Ap,At	4	35	6.90
Shard of Spring	SSI	Many	1	20	6.90
King's Quest II	Sierra	Ap, I	3	20	6.88
Hitchhiker's Guide	Infcm	Many	4	108	6.86
Planetfall	Infcm	Many	3	51	6.86
Trinity	Infcm	Many	1	22	6.82
Summer Games	Epyx	Many	2	35	6.79
Wishbringer	Infcm	Many	3	36	6.79
Racing Dest Set	EA	C	3	49	6.78
Marble Madness	EA	Many	2	20	6.71
Phantasie III	SSI	Many	1	20	6.70
Hardball	Accld	C,Ap	7	43	6.69
Ballblazer	Epyx	At,C	3	66	6.68
Adventure Con. Set	EA	Many	4	49	6.64
Archon II	EA	C,Ap,At	4	76	6.64
Karateka	Brodr	C,Ap,At	3	79	6.64
Suspended	Infcm	At,Ap,I	6	61	6.63

Challenging Missions:

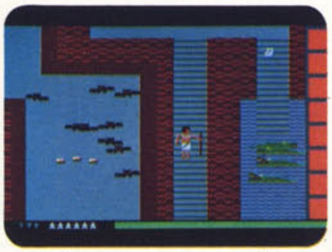
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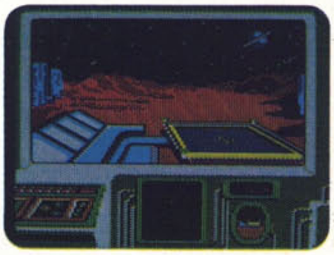


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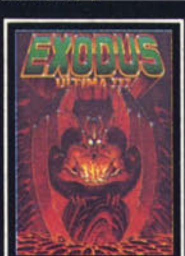
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